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Economic democracy, by Robert B. Reich

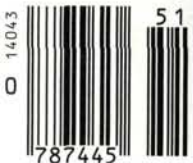
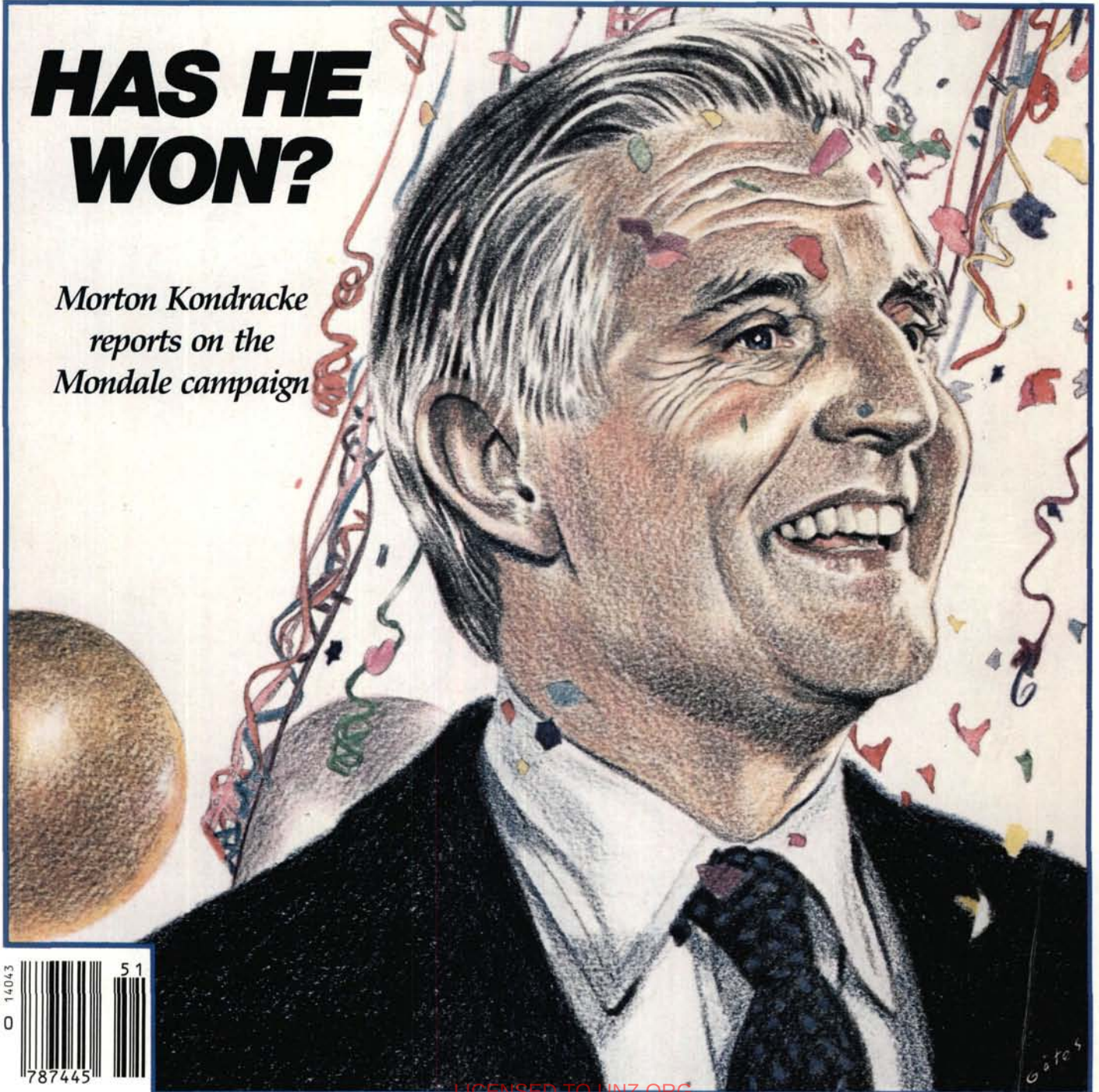
WHY THE FRENCH LIKE NUKES • IAN FRAZIER: EATING PLASTIC • TRB: LIBERTY'S VIRTUE

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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HAS HE WON?

*Morton Kondracke
reports on the
Mondale campaign*



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CORRESPONDENCE

INVASION AFTERMATH

To the editors:

Television journalism may have its faults, but I'll rely on my eyes and ears fixed on the tube for reports concerning the perilous position of American medical students in Grenada, rather than trust TNR on this factual issue ("Anatomy of a Little War," November 21).

On television, I saw and heard tearful, happy med students land at New York airports and, with no discernible ax to grind, praise the Marines as heroes for rescuing them from a country where since the violent coup, their freedom of movement had been restricted, food was becoming scarce, classes had been halted, and an Iranian hostage situation was a possibility. Newspapers carried the same reports. Thus, TNR's editorial statement that there was "no evidence" that the med students were in danger is so mystifying that it can only be explained by your editors' reflexive hand-wringing over each and every post-Vietnam American military action, no matter how justified. Your nervous Nellyism is so firmly implanted that you will obviously create facts where none exist, in order to suit your ideological purpose.

ELLIOT B. PASIK
New York, New York

To the editors:

TNR says the invasion of Grenada was undertaken for the wrong reasons, yet gives approval provided we do not repeat the stunt. Flawed thinking, vain hope. It's precisely because the announced reasons were invalid that a repeat performance is likely.

Aggression repeats itself least when done for sound cause.

HAROLD F. BREIMYER
Columbia, Missouri

To the editors:

I was disgusted to note how TNR cautiously straddled the fence in assigning praise not blame for Cowboy Reagan's invasion of Grenada. It was nauseating to encounter the complacently unctuous assessment in its final sentence: "good for the Grenadians, and . . . good for us, too."

But to the great relief of us who expect TNR to show some courage and backbone politically, the Washington

Diarist ("Gauging Grenada," TNR, November 21) redeemed the magazine with its caustic lancing of the minute Grenadian bubble, polishing things off with the Moslem suicide trucker "Safe in Allah's arms. Semper Fi." Terrific! Pulitzer Prize quality.

BEN W. FUSON
Louisa, Kentucky

To the editors:

TNR's editorial on Grenada contains the remarkable statement that the press "may have been spared the chance to misreport another war" as a consequence of the Reagan Administration's news censorship. This war was egregiously misreported precisely because of the restrictions upon reporters and the reliance upon government "facts." Your anatomy lesson would have benefited, not suffered, from a greater wealth of firsthand information.

GORDON T. RISK
Topeka, Kansas

MD'S RE TRB: D.O.A.

To the editors:

Doctors are blamed for many things, but it was incredible to find out that I was responsible for the Grenada invasion ("Doctor Bill," TNR, November 21). That conference call from the Secretary of Defense and the President must have slipped my mind.

My wife and children attempt to spend as though I make \$100,000 per year, but I can assure you that I don't.

TRB's presentation of how doctors charge and how Medicare pays are inaccurate, and the author certainly knows that it was not a fair presentation. If he knows a physician who is charging 30 percent more for Medicare patients than others, as a good citizen (or Big Brother), he should report this illegal activity.

If the author would like to discuss other points in further detail, I would gladly buy him a martini or a glass of carrot juice. Sorry, I can't afford dinner.

MITCHELL GANIER, M.D.
Boise, Idaho

To the editors:

TRB's inference that most of the ills besetting the medical establishment are the result of physician avarice must be challenged as must the suggestion that the Grenada incursion was undertaken

primarily to rescue medical students.

Physicians in general are a dedicated lot who are amply rewarded for their services but no more or less than others similarly trained and charged with comparable responsibilities. Capricious malpractice suits, increasingly restrictive policies by the government, and a plethora of bad press have all conspired to make the practicing physician more cynical and less idealistic.

The loser is, of course, the public. Americans are used to the best medical service in the world, but if these trends continue American medicine is bound to lose its preeminence. Articles like this do not improve the situation. We would hate to see medical service deteriorate into the cut-rate mediocre bureaucracy that TRB seems to desire. That there is a crisis in American medicine is clear. We hope that intelligent management and direction will help a new, workable, and humane system to evolve.

S. A. KAUFMAN, M.D.
Boston, Massachusetts

PERILS OF PRAGMATISM

To the editors:

Leslie Gelb's review of Stanley Karnow's *Vietnam: A History* ("Realists Against Reality," TNR, November 14) is an appalling demonstration of muddled and misdirected sentimentality. A reasonable fellow like himself, he assures us, is still the only type suited to resisting extremist interpretations of political events and steering a pragmatic course. The pragmatists may have led us into the Vietnam quagmire and kept us there, but the pragmatism dear to members of the American foreign policy elite is in no way to be held responsible for our problems. There was never any "real choice" in Vietnam, as all involved in the making of our policy knew. Those who "judge" what we did in Southeast Asia are hostages to dogma, ideology, or worse. Sophisticated people will speak instead of our "tragic mistake."

It is late in the day to remind Mr. Gelb that responsible people—including statesmen, who not only appreciate uncertainties but know very well that their power to alter a given situation for the better is "very limited"—do not then become embroiled in a way likely

to cause massive destruction. Mr. Gelb persists in believing that the Achesons and Bundys and McNamaras and Kissingers were "our best pragmatists," although everything he tells us about the conflict supports the view taken by war critics: that these men were indeed responsible for willfully ignoring what they had every reason to know, that there were many choices available to persons not themselves victims of an ideology that proclaimed itself pragmatism. Mr. Gelb, as he concedes, was a part of a foreign policy elite for which "Vietnam itself was almost irrelevant. It was always tied to larger concerns," to global strategies and conceptual abstractions like "containment." And yet Gelb argues that only resolute critics of the war were ideologues. Who could take seriously those who "began to inveigh against all the supporters as mindless hawks or proto-fascists?"

Of course, many effective critics said no such things, as those who remember the writings of scholars like Hans Morganthau and reporters like Joseph Kraft well know. And though it may serve Mr. Gelb's purposes to overlook the fact, some people on the left—like I. F. Stone—were busier tracking down contradictions and duplicities in official versions of the war than in sounding off about proto-fascism. Mr. Gelb obviously knows the Vietnam literature, yet he pretends that policymakers and their supporters saw only "minor opposition" among the respectable portion of their constituency.

Mr. Gelb, I conclude, is not the man to tell us what we are to learn from Vietnam. He himself has not learned that words like "nightmare" and "tragic," when they are glibly invoked in political discussions, are usually intended to conceal or justify a failure of judgment. He has not learned that those who "cry over the reality of the killing and the destruction and the impossibility of it all" are required then to oppose the policy that pursues "the impossibility" if they are to be praised for insight and humanity. Gelb's admiration of Karnow—"neither hawk nor dove"—who remained in the middle while seeing "no reason to hope" for anything good to come of the war is itself an object lesson in the peculiar obtuseness of the pious pragmatism to which many "moderates" still claim allegiance.

ROBERT BOYERS
Editor, *Salmagundi*
Poughkeepsie, New York



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FROM WASHINGTON

LIBERTY DEFLOWERED

A plan to raise money through private charity to repair the Statue of Liberty, symbol of America's noblest values, may seem hard to fault. But let's see what we can do.

The old girl will be 100 in 1986, and she suffers various infirmities. She was a gift from the French, but her pedestal was paid for, according to legend, with nickels and dimes contributed by American schoolchildren. So when the question arose of refurbishing Miss Liberty for her centennial, the Reagan Administration decided this was a perfect exercise for Reagan's theory that private generosity is better than government spending. Rather than appropriate funds for the National Park Service (Miss Liberty's employer) to fix her up, the government set up a foundation to raise the money privately. The foundation plans to raise \$230 million to repair the statue and build a museum of immigration on nearby Ellis Island.

Fundraising methods have progressed in a century. As little as \$20 million of the \$230 million is expected to come from "grass-roots" contributions; another \$50 to \$60 million will come from foundations and rich individuals. Half to two-thirds of the money will be raised from corporations. The 1984 Los Angeles Olympics has become the model for how to go about this sort of thing. Corporations that give more than a million dollars will get to use the statue in their advertising. Sensitive to the mirth potential of, say, "Official Underarm Spray of the Statue of Liberty," the foundation is peddling the encomium, "Proud Sponsor."

The first major corporation to join in is American Express, which is in the midst of a three-month promotional campaign using the slogan, "When did you first fall in love with her?" Amex

will contribute a penny to the cause every time you use their credit card or traveler's checks, and a dollar for every new account. The ads urge you to be "unabashedly sentimental" and use American Express, thereby "coming to the aid of the Statue of Liberty."

Through the haze of self-congratulation, the American Express campaign nicely illustrates the economics of a Reagan-style "private-sector initiative." The company hopes to raise \$1 million for the statue. A traveler's check for this majestic figure already has been presented at one of many staged publicity events. The promotional campaign, meanwhile, will cost \$4 million. Unabashed sentiment doesn't come cheap. As for saving the government money, since both the gift and the attendant promotional expenses (a total of \$5 million) will be tax-deductible, the taxpayers will be out almost \$2.5 million for the \$1 million American Express's private generosity has saved us. Thanks a lot, guys.

Presented with this morose calculus, American Express responds that all the money would be spent on corporate promotion anyway, so there's no net loss. If true, this certainly undermines

any temptation to feel grateful, which is precisely the feeling corporate sponsors want to buy. It is also said that corporate "cause-related marketing" (the trade term) helps to generate individual contributions to the cause. But if every corporation enrolled in the Statue of Liberty campaign spends four dollars bragging about its generosity for every dollar it actually gives, the total will be ten times what the foundation hopes to raise from individuals. And the tax deductions alone will cost the government more than building the whole project itself.

The foundation raised another million dollars from a "gala" last month at Lincoln Center. The economics of this one are dubious too. Even though stars like Luciano Pavarotti and Bob Hope donated their services, the affair cost well over \$300,000, including the fee of the public relations firm hired to arrange and promote it (as distinct from the public relations firm handling the foundation's general promotion, and from yet another public relations firm on the case for American Express). Listen, it takes an expert to know that being a "Donor" (\$1,000) is

continued on page 40

CLIFFORD GEERTZ "A name to reckon with!"

—PAUL ROBINSON,
New York Times Book Review

The award-winning author of *The Interpretation of Cultures* continues to guide us to a deeper understanding of human societies through the intimacies of "local knowledge." Breaking down false distinctions and rejecting large abstractions, he goes beyond mere translation of reality. "Displaying the tools by which an interpretive anthropologist works, he excites us over what is happening."—CHRISTOPHER LEHMANN-HAUPT,

New York Times

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

DECEMBER 19, 1983

NEVER WALK ALONE

There was a walk in the woods. Then there was a walk in the park. Finally there was a walk on the wild side. The history of the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe may be told by these walks.

The first happened on July 16, 1982, in the Jura Mountains, when the American negotiator, Paul Nitze, and the Soviet negotiator, Yuli Kvitsinsky, appeared to have found a formula—roughly, that the superpowers would agree to the same smaller numbers of these weapons, and that the Russians would dismantle a substantial share of their SS-20s and the Americans would not deploy the Pershing IIs. It turned out that both men had exceeded their instructions, and their governments scuttled the large achievement of that small stroll. The second happened on November 12, 1983, shortly before the West German Bundestag was to debate the American deployments, and more generally the mettle of the Atlantic alliance. Mr. Kvitsinsky approached Mr. Nitze with a final offer: if the Americans would agree not to deploy their 572 missiles, the Soviets would delete 572 warheads. Since there is more than a single warhead on the Soviet missiles, this obviously left the Soviets in a position of strength. Despite his appetite for an agreement (can hawks change their spots?), Mr. Nitze refused the offer, which, in any case, was a move in a struggle not so much for strategic stability as for West German opinion.

The Bundestag voted for the missiles after a debate that included the launching of paper airplanes marked Pershing by Helmut Schmidt and a sudden show by the Greens of pictures of Hiroshima, the Warsaw ghetto, Viet-

nam, and Nicaragua. The debate's rowdiness notwithstanding, the vote was an important event in the history of Atlanticism. It marked the defeat of the Soviet effort to stop the West's deployment by means of the West's democracy. The Soviets admitted defeat with the third walk, which was a walkout. On November 23 the Soviets made good on their missing leader's threat and "discontinued" the I.N.F. negotiations in Geneva. As a parting present, Mr. Nitze presented Mr. Kvitsinsky with something the Soviets had badly needed throughout the two years of talks—a pocket calculator.

This was the walk on the wild side. By liberal standards—indeed, by any standards of responsible conduct in this perilous world—there can be almost no greater sin than the refusal to talk about nuclear weapons. The Russians like to refer to themselves as peace loving, but they have done a peace-hating thing. (They went on to promise an aggrandizement of their own strategic and theater nuclear arsenals, though they probably meant nothing more than the modernization they had already planned.) The American offer that the Soviets left on the table was fair; it did not require that they destroy their I.N.F. force, only that they allow the other side one. It was consistent, in other words, with the rudimentary rules of deterrence. But these were not rules that the Russians were ready to follow. And if they are right that the Pershing and cruise missiles dilate the nuclear danger in Europe, then their desertion at Geneva dilates it more.

This week *Time* magazine distinguished itself with a detailed report by Strobe Talbot on the I.N.F. story. From

Mr. Talbot's new information and meticulous commentary some conclusions may be drawn. The first is that the only thing the Soviets were prepared to discuss at Geneva was the magnitude of their own monopoly. Each of their proposals amounted to another calculation of their I.N.F. advantage, and none of them ever conceded the principle of NATO parity. (Their famous argument that the parity is provided by the present French and British forces was refuted by their own last-minute willingness to forget about them. There is not a planner in the Soviet Union whose sleep is troubled by Mrs. Thatcher's Polaris missiles.) It was not arms control that the Soviets wanted in Geneva, then, but Western arms control. The strategic situation presented them with an opportunity unprecedented in the short history of arms control. They could hold real weapons against planned weapons. In previous negotiations both sides had the deadly devices in question, or both sides didn't. In the late lamented I.N.F. negotiations there was no such symmetry. These negotiations were never more than the diplomatic expression of a great political struggle. The Americans were determined to catch up, and the Russians were determined to prevent them.

IT MAY BE, in fact, that the inequality of the I.N.F. forces in Europe doomed the talks from the start. Of course there have been inequalities in previous talks, too, but inequalities of numbers, not inequalities of type. Indeed, it may be that the real conditions for arms control in Europe will be created precisely by the installation of the Pershings and the cruise. (This appears to have been Assistant Secretary of State Richard Burt's argument all along.) The arms control environment will have been normalized, you might say. When there is parity there can be reductions. The deployments are scheduled for all of five years; the Soviets seem sincerely to fear the Pershings; they can still make a deal. (Mr. Andropov has already sent the West German Foreign Minister a letter, signed no doubt in his absence, which hints at a return to the table, and a reversal of his Swiss stupidity.) With its own I.N.F. force on the ground, NATO will no longer feel that the Russians have an untoward influence on its security planning. For this to happen, though, the Russians will have to return to the table, this time not to husband an advantage but to diminish all our danger.

Anyway, hope springs eternal in the arms controller's breast. The NATO decision of 1979 was a "double track" decision: to negotiate the deployments even as we proceed to deploy. There is no good reason not to keep both tracks open. Let us stay this course. That may prolong the agony, some in the Pentagon protest; but the nuclear agony is real, and we are ill served by officials who do not feel it. This apotheosis of Atlanticism must not obscure the extent to which arms control is splendidly consistent with the alliance's military strategy and its moral reason for being. NATO has held steady to right a nuclear imbalance. It must stay steady to manage a nuclear balance.

What of the American part in the Geneva drama? The

American proposal, as we say, is very fair; it embodies the essential concept of the walk in the woods. Still, a review of the short and stormy I.N.F. saga leaves a troubling conclusion. It is that an arms control proposal is not an arms control process. This appears to have been the Reagan Administration's feeling. Make a good offer and head home for the holidays. A good offer, however, is not enough; it must be underwritten by a bureaucratic willingness to do the hard work of the hammering out, and by a political climate in which the good faith of a negotiation can be believed. Mr. Reagan's refusal to seek ratification of SALT II put a hairline crack in the West's nuclear consensus, now broken wide open by the German Social Democrats; and his abandonment of the nuclear test ban talks foreshadowed the Russians' noisy walkout from I.N.F. Still, Mr. Reagan's proposals in Geneva have been good. Yet a good proposal is only the beginning of a fruitful process. Too often the President has appeared to be negotiating not with the Soviets but with the parliamentary and public opinion of the United States and Western Europe. But now the military confidence for arms control exists. Ronald Reagan has his MX and he has his I.N.F. Peace through strength, he says, and not unwisely. We will have more strength; let us have more peace.

But we cannot talk only to ourselves.

ANALOGIES

Ours is no longer the age of analysis; we are now settled comfortably into the age of analogy. The analogy most lingered over is Vietnam. El Salvador is Vietnam; Lebanon is Vietnam; just about everything might be Vietnam. Grenada is not Vietnam; it is Afghanistan, not least because it was relatively easy, though Afghanistan was once supposed to be "their" Vietnam, because it was going to be so hard. The Reagan Administration, no less than its critics, is addicted to such easy uses of history. It has a different set of cautionary cases—its intervention in Grenada was accompanied by warnings of "another" Iran, and Suriname, and Nicaragua, and Cuba—and it has its own uses for the fresh memory of Vietnam. These analogies, of course, aren't meant to illumine. They're meant to intimidate. (If Lebanon is Vietnam, for example, then the best we can hope for them is a "decent interval." Discussion finished.)

The shabbiest and shallowest analogy we've seen recently comes from that most high-minded of columnists, Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times*. Right now he's enraged by the treatment the United States has accorded Bernard Coard, the murderer of many Grenadians, Maurice Bishop among them. Mr. Lewis does aver that Mr. Coard "was part of an extremely nasty gang." But what seems to upset him more is that our troops manacled and blindfolded Grenadian prisoners. He's right. Such treat-

ment violates the 1949 Geneva Convention, and it ought to be stopped. But Mr. Lewis goes further. He writes that "certainly any American who thinks this country has more humane ideals than revolutionary Iran should worry when our soldiers force prisoners to parade before cameras in manacles and blindfolds." Now that's some analogy. We're like Khomeini's Iran because both of us manacled and blindfolded prisoners. The Iranians also routinely kill Bahais, homosexuals, "Zionists," adulterers, blasphemers, modernizers, and other nasty people; but none of this appears to have complicated the analogy. Don't the differences matter? They should, for people who think.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE "VACUUM BOMB" DOES NOT EXIST. But that doesn't keep it from appearing in the newspapers and—who knows?—maybe, as time goes on, in the history books, too. The vacuum bomb was touted by one Franklin Lamb who somehow persuaded U.P.I. that there actually was such a bomb, built by the United States and used by Israel in Beirut last year—a bomb "designed to suck air out of the target over which it is detonated and causes an implosion that destroys the target." According to U.P.I., an eight-story building was "demolished without any sign of fire or shrapnel while surrounding buildings were unscathed." A month after this dispatch appeared around the country, an article in these pages ("The Implosion Plot," by Laurence Grafstein, *TNR*, September 6, 1982) proved that the story was a fraud. Here and there, however, references to this nonexistent new weapon continued to crop up. And then on November 6, 1983, while Palestinians were doing to each other what Israelis had once been accused of doing to them, *The Washington Post* noted this year's bombings with an article on last year's. And in that article we learn about a now "five or six-story building" that "had been leveled by an American-made vacuum bomb." Will the *Post* please take notice: the vacuum bomb does not exist, except as an imaginary device that causes carelessly researched newspaper stories to implode.

□ TWENTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "It was around 1:30 in the afternoon, Cuban time. We were having lunch in the living room of the modest summer residence which Fidel Castro owns on magnificent Varadero Beach, 120 kilometers from Havana. For at least the tenth time, I was questioning the Cuban leader on details of the negotiations with Russia before the missile installations last year. The telephone rang, a secretary in guerrilla garb announced that Mr. Dorticós, President of the Cuban Republic, had an urgent communication for the Prime Minister. Fidel picked up the phone and I heard him say: 'Como? Un atentado?' ('What's that? An attempted assassination?') He then turned to us to say that Kennedy had just been

struck down in Dallas. Then he went back to the telephone and exclaimed in a loud voice 'Herido? Muy gravemente?' ('Wounded? Very seriously?') He came back, sat down, and repeated three times the words: 'Es una mala noticia.' ('This is bad news.')

"('When Castro Heard the News,' by Jean Daniel, December 7, 1963.)

CROSSCURRENTS

AFTER GRENADA

"**P**RAVDA," and other observers of the world scene, have concluded that the Grenada operation proved nothing. Was there any doubt that a superpower could conquer a golf course? There is a point here, but only a small one. There never has been any doubt that the United States had the military capacity to knock over small countries. But there has been considerable doubt about whether it had the political means to sustain any such action. (Another way of saying this is that no one ever doubted American power, only American will. But words like "will" are as inflammatory as they are abstract. Better to talk about more real things, like politics.) For a long time it has been assumed, and with some justice, that no Administration would be capable of carrying out any military operation on foreign shores and get away with it politically. Only the most extreme, direct, deliberate (and, importantly, small-scale) provocation, like the seizure of the Mayaguez or the hostages in Iran, could provide the political basis for military action. And even then, the President had to be prepared to be criticized for failing to exhaust diplomatic options, for calculating the risks recklessly, for not consulting enough allies, or for any of a standing list of reasons not to act.

Pravda misunderstands the nature of President Reagan's victory. Without any political (i.e., public relations) preparation, he launched an invasion against an adversary that only a long and tortuous line of reasoning could demonstrate to threaten the security of the United States—and he received overwhelming popular support. Mr. Reagan's rise in the polls was dramatic and not at all as ephemeral as skeptics had predicted. His approval rating has risen to 63 percent, a rarity for modern Presidents at this point in their Administrations. The lesson of Grenada is that in America, too, there is a Falklands factor. Mr. Reagan's real victory was not the rout of the pathetic People's Revolutionary Army or the battalion of Cubans armed with recoilless shovels. It was the subsequent rout of his domestic opposition on Capitol Hill.

That victory was swift and total. Those few Democrats who managed an early word or two of criticism either changed their tune completely or made sure to express their lingering reservations off-camera. (Pat Moynihan, to

his credit, stuck to his guns, so to speak.) Others were quicker to read the overnight ratings and made sure from the start not to get on the wrong side of the issue. "I know how to count," explained one Senator. The original thin battle line against the President broke quickly. (At the same time, a similar message came from Lebanon, albeit negatively stated: American military involvement, even if it does not produce quick victory—on the contrary, even if it produces shocking losses in a poorly articulated cause—need not undo a Presidency. This would not have been predicted only a few years ago. Lebanon is a political drag on the President, but not a disaster. As one of my TNR colleagues put it in a slightly puzzled and bitter tone after the Marine massacre in Beirut, "If this had happened to Jimmy Carter, he'd have been impeached by now.")

The press told the story of the individual defections and retreats, but missed the bigger picture. It had its own defeat to worry about. Russell Baker caught the feeling in a column entitled "The Rout of the Scribe." What the press found so exasperating was that its protests about government censorship and managed news received no public support. These complaints were greeted either with yawns, or with public impatience at the press's preoccupation with its own prerogatives at a time of crisis.

One place these twin Presidential victories over the Democrats and the press were noticed was Managua. It is no accident, as the Marxists like to say, that the Sandinista regime is today hysterical about an American invasion. This is not because it thinks that the U.S. military is newly prepared, having tested its aircraft carriers and paratroopers at Point Salines and won. It is because President Reagan tested his domestic opposition and public opinion in Grenada and won. The Sandinistas have never doubted that the United States has the military capacity to overrun Nicaragua, nor that Mr. Reagan has long been itching to do so (the latter is a debatable point, I think, but what matters is their thinking). What they have counted on to prevent an invasion has been domestic American opposition. After Grenada, they're not so sure.

There's one other bulwark they lost in Grenada. In his post-invasion press conference, Castro admitted that Cuba could no more support Nicaragua against an American invasion than it could Grenada. The Sandinistas understood. The Cuban connection is good against domestic enemies only. Cuba can instruct on how to mobilize the masses, control the press, and organize Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. What the Cuban connection cannot do is defend you against the Eighty-second Airborne. That admission left the Sandinistas out in the cold (where, for example, the South Koreans found themselves in 1950 after Acheson neglected to include them in America's guaranteed sphere of influence).

Hence the recent flurry of almost panicked conciliatory gestures by the Managua regime. It has suddenly begun kicking out Cuban advisers and Salvadoran rebel leaders, and making overtures to the Catholic Church, private business, and the political opposition. *La Prensa* will be allowed enough hard currency to continue buying news-

print; there are reports that it may find censorship relaxed.

I am not discounting the effect of the ongoing anti-Sandinista guerrilla wars. But they have been going on for some time now, and, as even the C.I.A. has apparently concluded, they are not about to overthrow the Sandinista regime on their own. It's not *contra* pressure alone that has caused this mellowing of the Sandinista leadership. Nor is it the presence of American gunships off the coast of Nicaragua or the troops on maneuver in Honduras. These have also been in place for some time. The question in the Sandinista mind was: could they ever be used by an American President? One of their calculations was that such an attempt would be political suicide in Washington. They may now believe that it no longer is. And judging from the steps they have taken to convince Americans of their willingness to compromise, to keep their revolution within frontiers, and to be a bit less Leninist in treating the opposition, planting such an idea in their heads may not be all that bad a thing.

As predicted, the two-by-four has gotten the mule's attention. Now is the time to sit down with him and see what he has to offer. There is no better vindication for a big stick policy than a favorably negotiated settlement.

CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

The unfriendly skies of deregulation.

BANKRUPTCY AS USUAL

LAST September Frank Lorenzo, the chairman of Continental Airlines, faced what could have been one of those case studies for which his alma mater, Harvard Business School, is famous: a money-losing carrier was sinking fast in a business dependent on expensive equipment, plagued by high labor costs, and rocked by ferocious competition from some fourteen nonunion, cut-rate airlines that have sprung up since the industry was deregulated in 1978. To keep the company solvent, he needed to pare labor costs, reduce scheduled flights, ground unneeded airplanes, and cut fares. Lorenzo's solution was unorthodox by classroom standards and suspect by courtroom ones. He filed for bankruptcy using one federal law (Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy code) to avoid complying with another (the National Labor Relations Act and its companion law the National Railways Labor Act). He may get away with it.

Lorenzo was running a regional airline, Texas International, when he launched nonunion New York Air in 1980 to compete with Eastern Air Lines' New York-to-Washington shuttle. Airline unions at the time accused him of using Texas International assets to start a nonunion operation. Not surprisingly, the unions viewed this as threaten-

ing. Ill feeling turned to vehement distrust the next year when Lorenzo made a bid for Continental. Continental employees, along with Al Feldman, the popular chief executive at the time, made a counter offer for the airline. Texas International pilots exhorted a meeting of Continental workers with horror stories of working life under Lorenzo. Tim Gilmartin, a spokesman for the pilots' union in Denver, reported that Lorenzo and Texas pilots signed a contract under the good offices of a federal labor mediator and three days later Lorenzo refused to honor the agreement. (Lorenzo, responding through spokesman Bruce Miller, said, "There was indeed an agreement reached on certain components of the master contract, but never an agreement on the entire contract. To say that we signed a contract and reneged is totally false." The National Mediation Board refused to comment.) The bidding war dragged on and the employees lost the backing of their banks. When the bid collapsed, Feldman committed suicide in his office. Lorenzo won the airline.

Despite employees' evident discomfort with the new management, they were willing to cooperate with Lorenzo. Continental's pilots gave him \$100 million in concessions last year. Until the bankruptcy filing, Lorenzo was seeking another \$150 million in cuts this year, which would have sliced the airline's costs by 10 percent. Negotiations, against the backdrop of an \$84 million loss in the first half of the year, appeared to be making progress. Mechanics and noncontract workers had given up the \$50 million asked of them, flight attendants had offered a proposal detailing \$40 million worth of give-backs as their share, and the pilots had agreed in principle to concede their \$60 million share. But on the Wednesday before the filing, Stephen Wolf, Continental's president, abruptly quit—"for personal reasons," according to the official explanation. It seems more likely that Wolf stepped down because Lorenzo had decided to turn Continental into a smaller, cut-rate carrier, making Wolf's negotiation with the unions a shadow play. Lorenzo took over the president's spot the next day, and two days later declared bankruptcy. He cut service from seventy-seven cities to twenty-five, reduced the work force from twelve thousand five hundred to four thousand, and cut flight crews' salaries in half. In filing for bankruptcy, Lorenzo had only one purpose: to eliminate the need to negotiate with employees.

The unions are now screaming bad faith and union busting. Lorenzo claims that the pilots were dilatory in negotiations and that Continental would have soon run out of cash. The airline simply couldn't have operated much longer under the old contracts, Lorenzo argues. But of course the unions agreed; that's why they were making concessions.

Continental had the bankruptcy pro-

ceedings closed to the public when it came time to review its finances, which makes it all the more difficult to determine how long the airline had to survive. What is clear is that Lorenzo first thought Continental could be saved with \$150 million in concessions and then suddenly decided he wanted to be running a very different—and likely more profitable—sort of airline.

Lorenzo is not the first to use Chapter 11 to avoid negotiating with his unions. Last spring Wilson Foods, the nation's biggest pork processor, sought bankruptcy protection despite \$60 million in net assets. Wilson threw out its labor agreements and cut wages in half. Union members struck, then signed the new agreements dictated by the company. They are back at work, but challenging the company's filing in bankruptcy court.

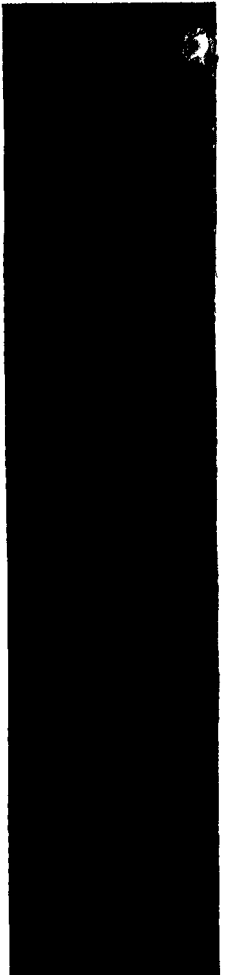
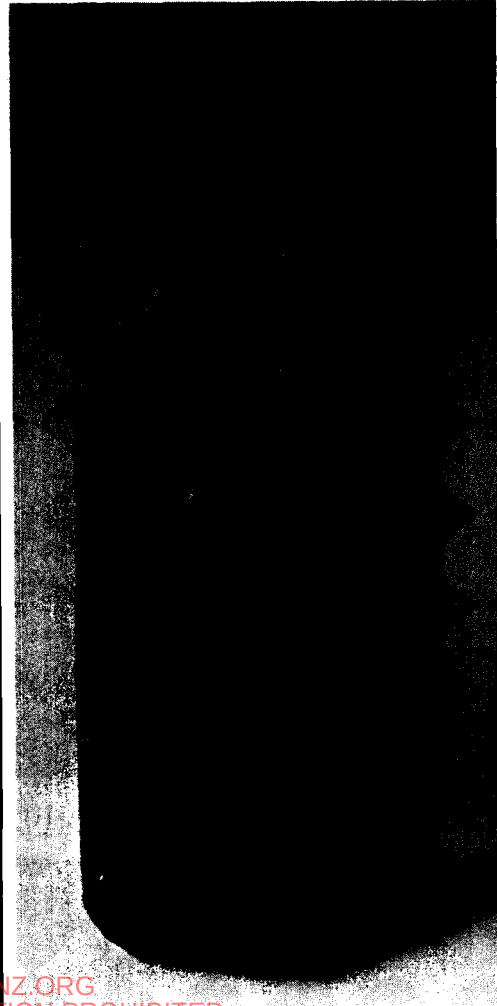
Like Wilson, Lorenzo has taken cunning advantage of the built-in conflict between bankruptcy and collective bargaining laws. Chapter 11 sensibly provides that, when possible, creditors be put on hold to give a failing company a chance to reorganize, salvage its operations, and save jobs. This means breaking contracts, although the contracts Congress had in mind when it wrote the law were mainly debts to banks and other creditors. Labor agreements are contracts, too, but of a very solemn sort. The National Labor Relations Act declares that "the policy of the United States [is] to eliminate the causes of certain substantial obstructions to the free flow of commerce . . . by encouraging the practice and procedure of collective bargaining. . . ." In other words, society has a special interest in seeing that labor and management come to terms and stick to those terms. Collective bargaining is, well, the American way.

Nevertheless, the courts have held that a labor contract is still a contract, and, as part of a detailed reorganization plan, can be abrogated under Chapter 11. They have had little success, though, in coming up with a formula for when that's allowed. The Second Circuit first said the equities on both sides should be balanced. In another case,

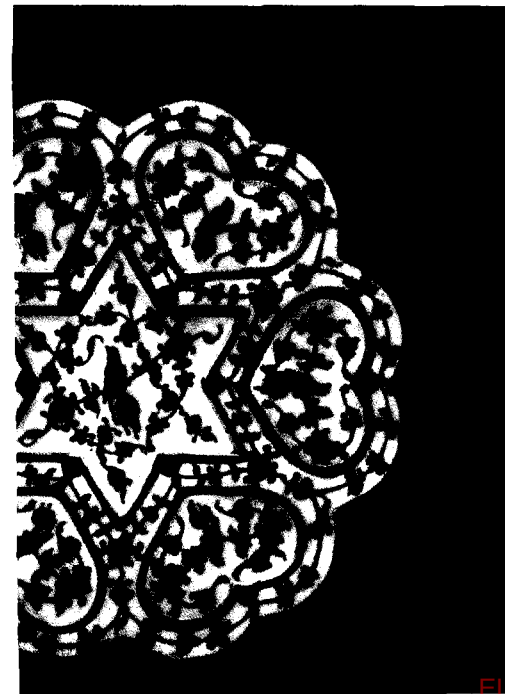
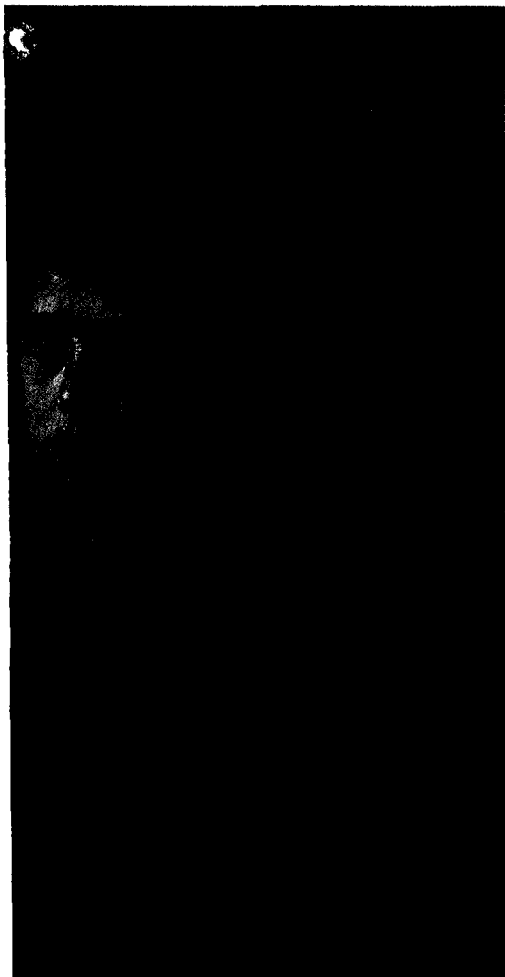


CARTOON BY MIKE PETERS

Precious



Legacy.



You are looking at objects that have been greatly treasured and greatly loved. Their history is one of the most terrifying and inspiring in the history of man. Their owners were the Jewish families of Eastern Europe and especially of Bohemia and Moravia. As they—and millions of other Europeans of all faiths—were being methodically exterminated by the Nazi regime, their treasures were being just as methodically collected, catalogued and preserved by the same Nazi regime for eventual showing in a “museum of an extinct people.” Today, through a chain of human understanding that would have been incomprehensible to the Nazi mentality, they have become our legacy. And now we can see them, for the first time in the United States, in an exhibition titled, “The Precious Legacy: Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections.”

Look at any one and you see history and art. Look at all and you see tragedy and transcendence. They are what their owners wanted them to be: links in a chain of beauty and faith. They intended them for future generations, and they have become ours. So long as we treasure these things, the people who loved them can never be “extinct.”

That's one reason we sponsored this exhibition, and why we urge you to see it at the places and times listed below. In our business as in yours, we need to be reminded that the measure of the meaning of our lives may one day be the things of beauty we treasured and preserved. Sponsorship of art that reminds us of this is not patronage. It is a business and human necessity.

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“The Precious Legacy: Judaic Treasures from the Czechoslovak State Collections” appears at the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., November 9-January 1, 1984; Bass Museum of Art, Miami Beach, January 21-March 18, 1984; The Jewish Museum, New York, April 15-August 26, 1984; San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, September 22-November 18, 1984; New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, December 15-February 10, 1985; Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, March 12-May 5, 1985; The Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, June 3-July 29, 1985.

(top left) AFTER THE BURIAL, (Artist Unknown), ca. 1780; (bottom left) TORAH CROWN, Repousse, 1840; (top right) PORTRAIT OF A BOY, Isidore Kaufmann, end of 19th century; (bottom right) PORCELAIN PASSOVER PLATE, Joseph Vater, ca. 1900; (bottom center) ALMS BOX, (Artist Unknown), early 19th century.
“The Precious Legacy,” is published by Summit Books, and is available in book form. © Philip Morris Inc. 1983
Organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

the court said a labor agreement can only be rejected if it is clear the company cannot survive any other way. The Third Circuit watered that test down in a case now before the Supreme Court, saying that the debtor doesn't need to show the contract is fatal, just burdensome. At least one court has recognized that breaking a labor agreement cannot be the only purpose of a reorganization. Last March, a Wisconsin bankruptcy judge threw the Tinti Construction Company out of court for bad faith because it had offered no reorganization plan aside from its desire to cut its labor costs.

Lorenzo's desire is no less urgent. But by Continental's own admission, the airline doesn't need to restructure its finances. Continental's spokesman, Bruce Miller, said, "nobody has been pressured from creditors." Chapter 11's principal author, Representative Don Edwards, Democrat of California, says the law was never meant to be a blunt instrument in the service of union bashing: "If that's what Continental is doing . . . we'll plug the loophole."

Maybe the bankruptcy judge in Houston hearing Continental's case will make that unnecessary. A labor agreement should only be abrogated as a last resort, following a detailed financial reorganization plan and compelling evidence that without that relief the company will founder. In the abstract, Lorenzo's moves make fine business sense. Indeed, his ruthlessness has something to be said for it. But using Chapter 11 to autocratically reject collective bargaining is not just an abuse of the bankruptcy code. It is a cavalier dismissal of how Americans have defined a portion of their democracy.

DANIEL NOSSITER

Daniel Nossiter writes from Washington.

Why France spurns pacifism.

LE GRAND SILENCE

Paris

AT A TIME WHEN peace demonstrations are sweeping Europe, France remains noticeably absent from the great nuclear debate. Judging from the size of its peace movement as the deployment of cruise and Pershing missiles begins, France is once again the odd man out in Europe. In the 1960s, however, under Charles de Gaulle, France played the part of a disruptive maverick in the Atlantic alliance; today the country displays a remarkable degree of concern about preserving the alliance. During President Mitterrand's recent visit to Brussels, he received almost unanimous support at home (while infuriating his

Belgian Socialist colleagues) by denouncing the imbalance between "pacifism which exists in the West while the missiles are deployed in the East." France is Europe's firmest supporter of the American missiles.

Paradoxically, it is the Gaullist legacy which has provided the country with an effective immunization against the pacifist temptation. By pulling France out of NATO in 1966 and building an independent nuclear missile force, de Gaulle made sure that he and his successors, not an American President, would decide how to deter a possible Soviet attack on France. Today in Great Britain and much of Western Europe, leaders of the peace movement are questioning the very notion of deterrence. But in France, there is an overwhelming consensus that the *force de frappe* is the best way to guarantee national security. The American missiles, of course, are being deployed on German soil, not French. So it is not surprising that the French agree that although the Gaullist independent defense policy is good for France, it would be disastrous if applied elsewhere. Hence the suspicion in Germany that the French are "ready to be defended to the last German."

AND THERE IS, perhaps, another way in which the Gaullist legacy remains influential. Pacifism has become a dirty word in French politics. In the 1930s the antimilitaristic tradition of the left, combined with right-wing appeasement of Hitler, led to the humiliation of Vichy. It is revealing that in all of Europe only in France are the supporters of the peace movement known as pacifists.

The identification of the French pacifist movement with the pro-Soviet French Communist Party—a declining force in French politics—has further confined the pacifists to their own ghetto. The P.C.F., a warm supporter of military rule in Poland and Afghanistan, remains the dominant force in the embryonic French peace movement. As in the other countries of southern Europe, the Communist presence tends to neutralize local peace movements. Domestic rivalry with the Communists leads Socialist leaders in France, Italy, and Portugal to be much more adamant in their support of nuclear defense than their Social Democratic counterparts in northern Europe, where Communist parties are virtually nonexistent but where pro-Soviet or "fellow-traveling" forces are influential within the Socialist parties.

The decline of the French Communist Party is part of more general changes in public attitudes about the two superpowers. The Gaullist and Communist anti-Americanism of the 1960s has severely eroded in recent years. To be sure, there was the recent campaign against what Mitterrand's minister of culture, Jack Lang, called "American cultural imperialism," but it was regarded by most as an anachronistic longing for cultural protectionism. There is also an element of often justified economic anti-Americanism. But here again, opinion polls show most French people find the rate of the dollar more worrisome than the "cowboy" image of President Reagan. Meanwhile, the image of the Soviet Union has been deteriorating steadily since the 1960s. Ten or fifteen years ago,

the French public was prepared to give Russia the benefit of the doubt, regarding the Soviets as weak on individual freedom but doing fine on jobs, education, and welfare benefits. Today, while in West Germany a substantial proportion of the population favors an equidistant stance vis-à-vis the superpowers, the French have become more resolutely anti-Soviet than anti-American.

This anti-Soviet predisposition originated on the left in the 1970s and only gradually made its impact on the Gaullist and Giscardian right wing. The key to understanding the difference between French and German attitudes in the nuclear defense debate lies in the contrasting itineraries of French and West German left-wing intellectuals. In Germany the radicals of the 1960s turned "green" in the 1970s, diluting their Marxism with "back to nature" ecology. The enemy was industrial society. From the rejection of nuclear energy for industrial growth it was only one step to the rejection of nuclear weapons to protect industrial society. In contrast, the French radicals of the 1960s today consider totalitarianism, rather than industrial society, the chief danger to democracy. Under the combined effects of what is known in France as "*l'effet Solzhenitsyn*" and General Jaruzelski's more recent suppression of Solidarity, most French intellectuals see Soviet Communism as the primary—though by no means only—totalitarian threat. Now the presence of even a few Communists in the overwhelmingly Socialist government gives the intellectuals pause.

The contrast can be seen in the two distinct reactions to the military coup in Poland. The European peace movements focused on nuclear weapons as a war threat that could make European (or Polish) freedom meaningless. The French intellectuals argued that the lack of freedom is the major source of a potential conflict in Europe; in other words, that Solidarity, by extending the margin of freedom within the Communist system, also helped disengage potentially belligerent sides. The imposition of a "state of war" internally not only crushed the first independent trade union in the Soviet bloc. It was also perceived as increasing the possibility of a "state of war" externally. In West Germany, hundreds of thousands demonstrated against missiles that were not yet deployed, and only hundreds demonstrated against the coup. In France, it was the other way around.

All this might suggest that French intellectuals, traditionally critics of the ruling party, have provided legitimacy for official policies since the left came to power. Nothing could be further from the truth. Last summer the spokesman for the Mitterrand government, the historian and novelist Max Gallo, bitterly complained in *Le Monde* that since the election of the first Socialist president in France in May 1981, French intellectuals have remained "strangely silent," indifferent, or even hostile to the Socialist experiment in domestic policy. Gallo argued convincingly that the left came into office at the very moment when traditionally left-wing intellectuals were deserting the ranks. The rise to power of the Socialists had coincided with the decline of the appeal of their ideology.

Gallo's article, of course, was not just an exercise in intellectual history. It was above all a rallying cry. The Socialist leadership, to reunite its quickly eroding constituency, apparently felt it had to reconquer the hearts and minds of the intelligentsia. The Socialists, understandably, considered the intellectuals' sulking unfair. After all, in the wake of de Gaulle's frustrated hopes of a Europe stretching from the Atlantic to the Urals, and of Giscard's disappointed faith in East-West détente through economic interdependence, wasn't Mitterrand's denunciation of Soviet expansionism in Afghanistan and military rule in Poland in keeping with the new antitotalitarian predisposition of the French intellectuals?

The rift between the government and the intellectuals—who had long been under the influence of Communist ideology—is likely to continue. The intellectuals will remain aloof as long as the Communist Party remains in the government. The dispute might even prove to be a sobering experience for both of them. The Socialists in power might learn to manage a crisis economy without ideological incantation; the intellectuals might examine even more deeply their worship of the God that failed. The silence of the intellectuals about the Socialist experiment at home seems a small price to pay for a foreign policy consensus that insulates France from the "pacifist" tide.

JACQUES RUPNIK

Jacques Rupnik is a fellow at the Center for International Affairs at the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques in Paris.

A doctor writes.

YOUR NUTRITION & YOU

THIS WEEK'S column is by way of apology to the many readers (too many, I'm afraid) whose unanswered letters sit in heaps in my study. Seems like ever since I published *If You Don't Like It, Don't Eat It* I've been fighting a losing battle to keep up my correspondence with thousands of people around the country who appreciate my plain-speaking approach to diet and health and who want to discuss their individual dietary plans with me. I wish I could answer every letter personally. I know all too well what it's like to wander alone in a wilderness of nutritional dogma. To those of you who find yourselves hopelessly confused by all the television diet gurus and esoteric health food treatises, I say, Don't give up! Keep searching for the eating program that's right for you—keep experimenting on yourselves and your families—and don't be afraid to buck the experts and their conventional wisdom! The following is only a small sampling from my

mailbag, but I hope all my readers will see a little bit of themselves in the questions, and learn from my answers.

Q: For the past ten years, my husband and I have been lactovegetarians, and we believe it is the diet God intended man to follow. It gives us great vitality and alertness, as well as a feeling of inner calm. I can honestly say that I no longer feel even the slightest desire to eat meat of any kind—in fact, the thought actually makes me a bit ill. Nowadays, the only time I ever stray from my diet is when I get the urge for some polyvinyl chloride. I don't know why it is, but those little plasticized fibers have a flavor that I absolutely adore. Once a week or so, I'll go out to the waste disposal bins at the local electronics plant and come home with laundry bags full. Then I'll sprinkle the fibers on salads, main dishes, even desserts. When my husband teases me about this, I tell him that everybody is entitled to one delightfully sinful treat. Don't you agree?

A: Often many of us forget that our appetites are a natural extension of the needs of our biochemistries. When we feel a strong craving for one substance or another, it usually means that our bodies lack that substance, and we should replenish our supplies. In your case, your body is telling you that you have electronic circuitry with dangerously exposed wiring somewhere inside you, and it's time to coat those wires with a reliable industrial insulator—like polyvinyl chloride fibers. Had you let yourself be ruled by your conscience, and denied yourself this "sinful treat," chances are you would now be suffering from debilitating electrical shorts. So go ahead, eat up, and bon appétit!

Q: As the mother of a large family, I see to it that we get three well-balanced meals each day, with plenty of meats and fish, fresh vegetables from our garden, and big, heaping bowlfuls of pure powdered Kepone (that stuff farmers used to spray on their crops sometimes from airplanes). Now if we could only get rid of this doggone twitching of the neck muscles which causes our heads to jerk violently at unpredictable intervals, everything would be perfect. Any suggestions?

A: Like all responsible members of the medical profession, I am often forced to admit that we do not yet have all the answers. I would need more details about your diet and overall health picture before I could make any definite statements about the symptom you describe. Could it be that you are getting too much vitamin D? If you are taking a D supplement and eating foods (such as dairy products) which have D added, that may be causing a buildup. Vitamin D is fat soluble and thus remains in the system, and it can be toxic in large amounts. Also, you may have a case of what we call "innocent" or "whimsical" twitching—a muscle contraction that the body performs every so often, apparently just for the fun of it. If your symptoms persist, you might try the following:

(1.) Lift with your legs, not your back, in order to distribute the strain more evenly.

(2.) Don't hesitate to ask for help with precision tasks such as passing a truck on the freeway or trimming the kids' hair.

(3.) Wear loose-fitting clothing.

These guidelines may not cure the condition, but they will at least make it easier to bear.

Q: Last year I decided to quit drinking, and I began to sample various nonalcoholic beverages looking for one I liked. Tomato juice with Tabasco, herb tea, carbon tetrachloride, soft drinks, Perrier and lime, reactor coolant, tonic water, hexachlorocyclopentadiene (C-56) on shaved ice, lemonade—I tried them all, but none seemed quite right. Then one evening I was at the home of a dry cleaner friend of mine, and he offered me some chlorobenzene. Wow! I'd never tasted anything like it! It had a delicious, almondy flavor combined with a bracing, almost overpowering astringency that could make a man forget blended malt whiskies forever. Right then and there, it became my beverage of choice.

Since I've been on the wagon, I feel much better (aside from a pesky red rash on the backs of my legs, along with weight loss, dizziness, and this darn second row of teeth I've started to grow), but if it weren't for chlorobenzene, I'd probably have gone back to the bottle long ago. I'm wondering—why isn't this wonderful product on the shelves at my supermarket or beverage store? I am forced to purchase it from dry-cleaning supply houses.

A: Don't ask me—ask the high panjandruns at the Food and Drug Administration! They're the ones who have chlorobenzene trussed up in red tape that limits it to commercial use only. Notoriously finicky eaters themselves, these career bureaucrats delight in dictating the menu for all America. And of course, it is you and I, the consumer, who must suffer. We can only hope that one day our government will come to its senses and stop treating its citizens as if they were all still in short pants, incapable of making the simplest decision about their lives. As for that second row of teeth you've developed—remember that twice as many teeth means you should be brushing twice as long. Recent studies have shown a clear link between oral health and the health of the body as a whole.

Q: I love lead—have ever since I was a youngster. I was raised on crunchy lead-based paint flakes, bite-sized toy soldiers made of lead, and good old-fashioned lead pencils. Today my kids and grandkids live in a completely different world. When they want something to chew on, they reach for the modern acrylic-based paint flakes, or plastic army men, or ersatz fruit-flavored marking pens. I tell them they don't know what they're missing. They call me an old dinosaur. Then they say that they've heard lead is bad for you. This gravels me, because I've been eating lead for years and am in perfect shape, except for some minor central nervous system damage which causes me to walk in tight circles. I'm all the time trying to get them to try a little lead, and they're always trying to get me to cut

down. Neither of us will budge an inch. Who's right, them or me?

A: If lead is harmful to human beings, this is the first I've heard of it. I suppose if you ate enough of it, it might be, but you'd have to eat a tremendous amount, much more than any one person is likely to want. You might ask your young relatives, if lead is so harmful, why did the Romans, rulers of a vast empire, install drinking fountains made of lead in every entrance to their Coliseum? Most people today are unaware of that fact, as they are of lead's other benefits. Today, as always, lead's worst enemy is public ignorance. You might also remind the skeptical younger folks that fifty years ago, central nervous system damage was as common as hiccoughs—and taken about as seriously. Back then, if you had central nervous system damage, you didn't go looking for scapegoats among the heavy metals. You just changed into some loose-fitting clothing and went about your business—a prescription I am sure we would all find every bit as valid today.

Readers wishing a transcript of this column should sit down and copy it out in a firm hand on sheets of ruled paper. Then mail a check or money order for \$12.99 to Hooker Publishing, 2,4,5-T Street, Niagara Falls, New York, 13870.

IAN FRAZIER

Ian Frazier's articles and stories have appeared in *The New Yorker* and *The Atlantic*, among other places.

What price cultural intervention?

CINÉMA VÉRITÉ

Durban

IN Tomas Gutierrez Alea's *The Last Supper*, made in 1976, one of the last of the great Cuban revolutionary films, the devout Spanish owner of an eighteenth-century sugar plantation washes and then kisses the feet of twelve of his more presentable black slaves. It is Easter season, and on the following day the selected slaves are invited to dine with their master. He is, of course, ritually playing Christ. But his paternalistic efforts to save their souls, and to salve his own conscience, backfire. By granting Good Friday as a day of rest without informing his brutal foreman (who then whips the slaves for idleness), he causes a bloody revolt. Shocked by their perfidy after his favors to them, the master shows his true face, and by implication that of early capitalism. He hunts down and crucifies the offenders.

It is not, on the face of it, the ideal movie to show at the Durban and Cape Town film festivals in South Africa,

which struggle to show international films to fully multi-racial audiences in a society where the movie theaters are segregated. The festivals are mostly attended by card-carrying liberals to whom Alea's message does not necessarily apply. But *The Last Supper* was also taken to Umlazi, one of the gaunt and crowded black townships that provide Durban with cheap labor, where it was shown to an audience of black students at the Mangosuthu Technikon, a huge and superbly designed college for Africans through which the regime seeks to create a black middle class able eventually to buttress Afrikanerdom with a vested interest in the status quo.

THE FILM was received with much applause and excitement, and afterward I, as a visiting English film critic, attempted to explain and discuss it. Explanations, however, were not necessary. The students had instantly recognized the extraordinary parallels between the film's fiction and modern realities in South Africa. Even the central dinner party section, a sequence worthy of Buñuel, with its spiteful contrasting of the plantation owner's pseudo-mystical holiness and the literal humanism of his unfortunate guests, was related most skillfully to their own situation. One of the first questions asked was: "In view of the actions of the whites in the film, can we trust any white man?"

My answer was not exactly what I wanted it to be: "The maker of the film is white. Would you trust him?" But it was the best I could do under the circumstances. What I almost said was "no," despite the fact that Ros Sarkin, the most radical of the Progressive Party members on the Durban City Council and the organizer of the Durban Festival, was in the audience. It was she who had insisted on showing *The Last Supper* and other "incendiary" films such as the series of Nadine Gordimer stories made by independent filmmakers and financed by South African Television, but never broadcast by the state-controlled channel because of their undisguised attacks on apartheid. And she had done so despite an initial directive from the Censor Board—later reluctantly retracted—which suggested that such a program was a "travesty" of educational intentions.

Mrs. Sarkin, who is Jewish and the wife of a distinguished South African surgeon, has been fighting the good liberal fight for many years with an audacious combination of frontal assault and stealth. She started the Durban Festival five years ago, and has watched it grow from negligible beginnings to an event selling some forty thousand tickets and showing about fifty films from all over the world. It would be inconceivable for Africans not to trust her. But the question she has to ask herself, as no doubt she does, is whether or not this kind of cultural intervention is worth pursuing in a country marching toward a bloody violence of its own making.

It must, for instance, have been blindingly clear to the few whites present that the blacks who watched *The Last Supper* with such attention were not about to turn into a docile band of skilled workers willing and able to shore up

the present regime, even if apartheid was somehow softened and democratized. They were surprisingly sophisticated (having evidently read and digested several banned political authors), and fully able to learn every lesson Alea was supplying to them. The church that many of their parents believed in, they said, was not capable of helping them, any more than the Christians in the film. Africa had its own solutions, and sooner or later they would be applied. Their attitudes toward politics as well as toward religion seemed entirely different from those of their parents, whose view of apartheid tends to be that it is a terrible philosophy because it prevents blacks from taking their just place within a prosperous community. Those of the younger generation believe in a black state, to be brought about by violent revolution if necessary. And they do not look as if they will grow out of their radicalism as quickly as students in the West.

THE VIEW of Christianity as an instrument of repression is not yet general among young Africans. But it is increasing, since it is made abundantly obvious to them that Afrikanerdom was founded on the bleak verities of the Dutch Reformed Church. The state, like the plantation owner in *The Last Supper*, regards itself as a paternalist, civilizing force, threatened by anti-Christian forces abetted by a prevaricating and hypocritical outside world which knows nothing of the Afrikaners' fight for survival. What that outside world does forget, and it is a fact of which many black Africans are ignorant, is that the first concentration camps were arguably established during the Boer War by the British, and Afrikaner homesteaders were the inmates. No one can begin to understand the South African situation without first learning that it had its root cause in a different kind of racism than that between white and black. It was between white and white. It is a common saying in South Africa that if only they themselves would realize it, the Afrikaner and the African are as near to each other in spirit as in name, except that the former are a minority and the latter a majority in the beautiful, rich land both believe to be their birthright.

But is the time for such argument not too late? Twenty years ago, after the trauma of Sharpeville, there might still have been a chance to institute a multiracial society so much more prosperous than any other on the continent that the fact that it was not a wholly black state would somehow be accepted by the rest of the world and tolerated in Africa. Today, even the advent of something so unlikely as a Progressive government, with its Mrs. Sarkin in the van, would scarcely push the waves of black nationalism back from the shore. Nobody knows what will, in fact, transpire, but it looks very much as if little good will come of anything. So what price cultural intervention?

Yet the cultural boycott demanded by the African and Indian National Congresses (which I, incidentally, broke by venturing to Durban and Cape Town in my capacity as a working critic from *The Guardian*), is clearly problematical. It is the liberals who have been inconvenienced by threats of blacklisting, and who thus don't go. Sir Richard

Attenborough, a member of Britain's Social Democratic Party and formerly a Labour supporter, was one recent example. His visit in support of the Oscar-laden *Gandhi* was made impossible when the Indian National Congress asked him not to come, even to speak to nonwhite audiences. There is little doubt that he would have spoken out against apartheid in the movie theaters, for which even conservative cinema owners have little use. Live theaters were forced to become multiracial when faced with the refusal of foreign companies to tour South Africa. An intervention by a director of Attenborough's stature might well have been the beginning of the end of segregated cinemas, had it been carefully handled.

Would such a move have been worth the effort, or simply another futile cosmetic change? Is the fact that the Durban and Cape Town festivals have both shown films by black Americans, and are run on impeccably liberal lines, of any real significance? Mrs. Sarkin does not say that it is, only that it might be, and that even one chance in a thousand is worth taking. Her view is that the consciousness of white South Africans can be changed, or at least that they can be persuaded of their vested interest in the possibility of peaceful revolution.

She may be right. But even if she is not, liberals and radicals such as herself surely deserve the support and encouragement of those in other countries who do not have to lay themselves on the line for their beliefs. The cultural boycott is both right and effective. But boycotts can be as powerful when selective as when total, when the curtain can be allowed to rise a little and provide a chink of light that shows what has been missing. No one who has read South African papers, heard South African radio, or watched South African television can doubt the stultifying effect of a heavily censored media upon white opinion. No one who saw *The Last Supper* or the Nadine Gordimer series at Durban and Cape Town, let alone Umlazi, could have gainsaid the feeling of a veil being lifted in the minds of many of those present.

A tiny one, perhaps, and a complicated one too, since the group of Frederick Wiseman documentaries about American institutions—including *Hospital*, *Welfare*, and a film about the army, *Basic Training*—also shown at Durban and Umlazi, must have inspired in those audiences the thought that America, for many Africans now the font of black progress, is hardly yet a paragon of virtue as far as racism is concerned. But every small step forward in South Africa gets more and more difficult to retrace; such is the fear of an uncertain future if tolerance among the races does not somehow increase. Few of those who say apartheid will transform itself into something miraculously acceptable in the natural course of events do not also admit that it needs the kind of push people like Mrs. Sarkin are giving it, with a little help from foreign friends.

DEREK MALCOLM

Derek Malcolm has been the film critic for *The Guardian* of London since 1970.

What on earth has Glenn been doing?

IN LIKE FRITZ

By MORTON KONDRACKE

BY EVERY ordinary measure of political performance, Walter Mondale has trounced John Glenn in the 1983 phase of the 1984 Democratic Presidential campaign. As of September 30, Mondale had raised \$6.1 million to Glenn's \$4.1 million, and by the end of the year Mondale will have raised more than \$9 million to Glenn's \$6 million or \$7 million. Glenn surged close to Mondale in most public opinion polls in May and June, but by November Mondale was comfortably out front again—by 21 points in the Harris poll, 28 points in *The Washington Post-ABC* poll, 19 points in the Gallup poll, and even 13 points in the Penn-Schoen poll, regarded by Glenn campaign officials as the most reliable of the lot. As *The New York Times* reported on November 28, Mondale had 175 campaign workers at work in twenty-one states; Glenn had 122 paid organizers in fifteen states. No one has kept accurate count of major endorsements by political figures and organizations, but there is no question that Mondale is far ahead among mayors, members of Congress, governors, party professionals and interest groups, topped off by the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the National Education Association. The foremost arena of public competition in 1983 was state party straw polls, and here, too, Mondale bested Glenn consistently. In most places, Glenn finished behind both Mondale and Senator Alan Cranston of California.

The crucial question, of course, is whether 1983 results mean much for 1984. Clearly they do not mean everything, as history shows. The landscape is so littered with the names of front-runners who failed and longshots who triumphed—Rockefeller and Goldwater in 1963, Muskie and McGovern in 1971, Jackson (or Bayh or Udall) and Jimmy Carter in 1975, Edward Kennedy and Carter in 1979—that betting on the conventional wisdom of any

moment seems a recipe for disaster. It is remotely possible that Cranston, Gary Hart, or Ernest Hollings could rush to the fore, Carter-style. But in most polls only Jesse Jackson has even broken into double digits, and this year the nominating system is specifically stacked to prevent surprises. For once, conventional wisdom seems correct. This is a two-man race and Mondale is ahead.

The Glenn campaign certainly does not think that Mondale's lead is insurmountable. In fact, some of Glenn's strategists sound as if they had planned a Dallas Cowboys-style fourth-quarter come-from-behind strategy all along. "1983 was the exhibition season," said manager Bill White. "1984 is the real season."

White is right but only partially. Mondale's 1983 victories didn't win him any delegates but they will pay dividends in 1984. The amount of money the candidates raise in 1983 in contributions of under \$250 determines how much matching money they will get from the federal government in January 1984. Mondale manag-



DRAWING BY DONALD GATES FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

ers figure that their 1983 lead of \$3 million may swell to as much as \$6 million just as the time arrives to buy advertising and pay workers for the twenty-seven-state blitz of caucuses and primaries that commences in Iowa on February 20 and allocates 47 percent of the delegates to the Democratic convention by the end of March. Both campaigns acknowledge they will not have money to run all-out everywhere, but a money advantage will enable Mondale to run harder in more places. His managers say their 1983 fundraising also has enabled them to assemble a bigger list of small contributors who can be solicited again for matchable money as the campaign proceeds. On December 10 alone, the Mondale campaign hopes to attract seventy thousand people to seven thousand house

parties across the country and raise \$750,000, all of it federally matchable.

To be sure, endorsements aren't what they used to be, but they aren't insignificant either, as Mondale is likely to show on January 18, when the House Democratic caucus selects its 164 delegates to the national convention in the first real test of strength for 1984. Both Glenn and Mondale have put top talent to work on the contest—Glenn's headed by his principal managers, Washington lobbyists Robert Keefe and Thomas Boggs, and by Representative Jim Jones of Oklahoma; and Mondale's by his former Vice Presidential chief of staff, Richard Moe, and Representatives Gillis Long of Louisiana, Tom Downey of New York, Les AuCoin of Oregon, and Marty Russo of Illinois. Mondale seems certain to win a majority of the House delegates, possibly by as much as a two-to-one margin.

Similarly the endorsement of Mondale by the Cook County Democratic organization in Illinois—a conservative group that might have been wooed successfully by Glenn—will help in the March 20 primary, where delegates' names are on the ballot, and help attract voters to the Presidential candidate. Endorsements from black leaders—including Coretta Scott King and Mayors Coleman Young of Detroit and Tom Bradley of Los Angeles—will help limit the damage caused by Jesse Jackson in the South. And the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and N.E.A. endorsements will mean up to \$20 million worth of workers, transportation, publicity, and voter-turnout activities for Mondale.

IT'S TRUE that the straw polls of 1983 are long forgotten, but they had two useful functions for Mondale besides their immediate publicity value and the longer-term sense of momentum they created. First, they were encouraged by Mondale's managers as a means of "nationalizing" the campaign and preventing Gary Hart and Alan Cranston from spending all their time and energy in Iowa and New Hampshire and staging a surprise victory. Second, when Mondale unexpectedly lost to Cranston in the Wisconsin straw poll on June 10, his managers decided to go all-out to win the Maine poll on October 1, and used it as an opportunity to train several dozen young organizers who are now staffing Mondale campaign offices all over the country. Mondale won the Maine poll with 51 percent to Cranston's 29 percent (Glenn, who declined to compete, got 6 percent), but almost as importantly, he got his staff prepared for 1984 campaigns in caucus states, where essentially the same skills are required as in a straw poll.

Only 5 percent or so of a state's Democrats are likely to turn out for precinct meetings in a caucus state, as opposed to 40 percent in a primary election, so the advantage goes to the campaign with the greater organizational depth—precinct coverage, the ability to contact and identify supporters, and to turn them out on caucus night. The organizational advantage is diminished in a primary, where television plays a bigger role. Even Glenn's top aides admit that Mondale has an edge in the caucus states,

including Iowa. What hasn't been recognized is that in the early weeks of the campaign caucus states (among them Maine, Oklahoma, Washington, Mississippi, South Carolina, Michigan, and Kentucky) outnumber primaries two-to-one, and give Mondale another advantage.

All of this, as one Glenn campaign chief acknowledged, "did not come about by accident." If ever a Presidential campaign was carefully planned in advance, it is the Mondale effort of 1984. In fact, Mondale first sat down with his top Vice Presidential advisers, Moe, Jim Johnson, and Michael Berman, during the week after the 1980 election to begin preparing for 1984. By the time Ronald Reagan was inaugurated, Mondale had a law firm to hang his hat in, a string of visiting professorships to keep up a Minnesota connection with, a political action committee formed, and an early schedule assembled. Johnson, at age 36, a veteran of four previous Presidential campaigns and Mondale's traveling companion during the Vice Presidency, was put in charge of Presidential planning.

Johnson, a tall, quiet, methodical man with a clean desk and a phenomenal memory, put together Mondale's first comprehensive 1984 strategy document in February of 1981. Glenn's chief campaign aide, Bill White, an Ohioan who had no previous national political experience, did not draft a full-blown strategy memo until November 1982.

Part of Mondale's 1982 strategy against Glenn, according to Johnson, was to accelerate the campaign. "We wanted to do everything possible to generate interest in the 1984 race and put requirements on people to be acting fast enough. Our belief was that we had to get Glenn into the political frame. We felt if he was sitting out above it all, he was an unknown quantity. So we put pressure on him to politicize, to start making his decisions, choosing his staff, forming a PAC, announce his candidacy. There must have been five hundred stories written saying that 'Glenn's behind the curve.' " The 1982 strategy also called for Mondale to keep maximum pressure on President Reagan, to use Reagan policies to unify Democrats, to "focus on the future," and to develop position papers that would force other candidates to react to the Mondale agenda.

GLENN'S PEOPLE announce almost proudly that whereas Mondale had a campaign structure that was "fourteen stories tall" by mid-1982, "we had done nothing" until August, when Glenn approved plans for a Presidential advisory committee. White's strategy memo of November 24, 1982, "has basically guided the campaign from that moment to this," its author said. Though it did not contemplate Kennedy's withdrawal, it did identify Cranston as a more potent contender than Gary Hart. "In terms of general themes and messages, there haven't been any major deviations," White said. "In 1983, Mondale did what he had to do and we did what we had to do."

White grants that Mondale's successes are more apparent now than Glenn's. "Mondale and Glenn are looking at the same voters, the same base of support," he said, "but they are going after it in different ways. Mondale is going

after leadership in hopes that leadership can get him the voters. Glenn is appealing to the membership and if he gets it, leadership will come around and not stand in his way. We are after the unorganized constituencies. Mondale is after the organized ones."

According to White, "We are trying to pace our expenditures. We are not organizing for effect. It doesn't take fourteen months to organize Iowa. You get more bang for the buck when you spend your money later rather than earlier. That's why we didn't compete in the straw polls. We are doing exactly what we wanted to do all along."

Frankly, that sounds a lot more like putting a pleasant face on grim reality than smart planning. In fact, Glenn did compete in early straw polls and even sought and scored a victory in New Jersey where Mondale was not present. Glenn never rejected endorsements from unions or teacher groups in his Ohio campaigns, and made some effort to challenge Mondale this year, arguing that he was more electable than Mondale against Reagan. Organizationally, Glenn started late, but he did hire Joe Grandmaison, a skilled field operative, to set up offices in the states. But after a series of inspections of the organization this fall, including one by a Detroit management consultant, Jeff Hochman, Grandmaison was replaced by Robert Keefe, one of whose jobs will be to bring more political heavyweights into the campaign. Keefe has begun by assigning Jerry Vento, who helped organize Iowa for Carter in 1980, to run the campaign there, and Boston political consultant Paul Shone to run New Hampshire.

ACCORDING TO Mondale's campaign chief, Jim Johnson, Glenn has operated backward. "Early on, when he needed a Bob Keefe to win over political regulars, they had Joe Grandmaison, the detail man, in charge. Now, just when they need somebody who knows how to run a phone bank and get volunteers to hand out ten thousand leaflets, they have Keefe." Johnson thinks that substantively, too, Glenn is doing things backward. "Had there been a conservative candidacy in 1983, I believe there are an awful lot of places in both the South and the North where important people might have been with Glenn, but they were nowhere ideologically, emphasizing electability, and we went out and got the Cook County organization, Bert Lance in Georgia, and other moderate-to-conservative Democrats. Now we are going into the caucuses, which are primarily populated by activists and liberals, and Glenn is sounding more conservative and attacking us from the right."

The latest strategy of the Glenn campaign seems to be "attack Mondale," but the Glenn organization calls it "differentiation"—an effort to identify Glenn in people's minds by showing how he is different from Mondale. Despite a generally favorable aura about Glenn, his pollster William Hamilton has found that voters lack a clear idea of what Glenn stands for. At the same time, Democratic voters tend to be less liberal on issues than Mondale has been, especially during his days as a Senator. So the

Glenn strategy has been to paint Mondale as the servant of special interests, as someone who supported one set of policies as Vice President and another set as a candidate, as an opponent of adequate defense spending, and as a big spender on behalf of government programs. Mondale has been hitting back in ways designed to magnify the ideological difference between the candidates, accusing Glenn of writing "blank checks" to the Pentagon and advocating a "regressive" 10 percent tax surcharge to lower deficits.

Both campaigns accuse the other of failing to enunciate a galvanizing message to the electorate, and here both sides are exactly right. Both Glenn and Mondale are trying to make "the future" somehow the main theme of the campaign, but neither of them has been able so far to get past spending money—or not spending money—as a way of bringing the future to pass. Neither has articulated anything like a foreign policy that will inspire allies and daunt adversaries; Mondale's foreign policy seems more uncertain than flexible, and Glenn's more brittle than firm.

THERE REMAINS a theoretical possibility that Glenn could break through this miasma and electrify the electorate, making it suddenly clear why he is more capable of leading the nation than Mondale is. There is also a possibility that the current Glenn message and strategy are working, but that observers like me are too caught up in conventional wisdom to see it. That said, however, what appears to be shaping up is a Mondale victory in Iowa, where the *Des Moines Register* Iowa poll in October showed Mondale ahead by 46 to 27 and a private poll for Alan Cranston shows Mondale leading 45 to 26. Glenn's chances in Iowa depend upon his expanding the electorate from the usual 100,000 caucus participants to 150,000 or 170,000, but this requires a galvanizing media message plus organization, and Mondale will have his own media plus an organization that has been mobilized in all the state's 3,000 precincts for months. The race is a good deal closer in New Hampshire, where one candidate or another is likely to slip into first place with 20-odd percent of the vote. Glenn's people concede that their man has to win someplace on March 13, presumably in Georgia, Alabama, and/or Florida, though Gallup and the Atlanta-based Darden poll show Mondale now ahead even in much of the South. Gallup also has Mondale leading in Illinois, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Texas and California, though Glenn aides complain that the samples were too small, the results were unreliable and independent voters (a key Glenn target group) were not counted.

Still, if the seeds of a Glenn victory are germinating, some sign of it ought to be evident. At the moment, none is. Magic reversals are certainly possible in politics, but fundamentals—money, organization, planning, experience, and support—usually carry the day. Mondale won the 1983 campaign on fundamentals, and he's far ahead for 1984.

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Streisand on the Roof

At last Barbra Streisand has found the right director, one who has perfect sympathy with her talent, personality, and ambition. Herself, of course. She directed herself in *Yentl*, and, certainly as far as her performance is concerned (but in

Yentl
(MGM/UA)

other ways, too), she has done a good job of it. Consider *Yentl* as a Streisand display piece, and it's a knockout.

I've long been in the adverse minority about her films, and, to judge by what I've read so far, I'm still in the minority by responding warmly to this film. Many of those who cheered her in films that I found abrasive or grossly exhibitionist now think that she has lost control by insisting on co-writing, directing, and producing her own film. For me, she has gained control, in the literal and the basically relevant senses. Her open declaration that she needs to run her own show indicates only that, at her own level, she has recognized what, for instance, Chaplin recognized: she cannot let anyone intervene between her and the audience. The resulting paradox is that in *Yentl*, concentrated on her though the picture is, she seems less egotistical than ever, more at the service of her role and of her fellow performers. In 1968, when she was acting in her first film, *Funny Girl*, her disagreements with the director, William Wyler, were notorious; the widespread story was that Wyler said to a friend, "Well, I have to be patient with her. After all, this is the first film she's directed." Wise Wyler apparently discerned a truth. On the evidence of *Yentl*, she is exactly the director she has needed. She ought never to permit anyone else to direct her again.

However, *Yentl* as a rendition of *shtetl* life in Eastern Europe in 1904—the date assigned—is another matter. This film is to fact as *Fiddler on the Roof* was to fact except that, unlike *Fiddler*, it doesn't

contain even one neatly choreographed little pogrom. *Yentl* takes place in a country populated entirely by Jews where prejudice and oppression do not exist, where one doesn't even see a soldier or a policeman. (The exteriors were shot in Czechoslovakia.) As an adaptation of I. B. Singer's story, it is both reduced and embroidered. The dramatization by Leah Napolin and Singer, which was first presented Off Broadway in 1974, retained some of the sexual complexities. In the film these complexities are explored about as deeply as in *Charley's Aunt*. The screenplay that Streisand wrote with Jack Rosenthal gives grounds to those who want to complain of literary infidelity and historical inaccuracy. But did anyone complain that *Hello, Dolly!* was a distorted rendition of nineteenth-century New York and strayed from both Thornton Wilder and Johann Nestroy? Streisand, with Rosenthal, constructed a star vehicle for herself, with opportunities to get laughs, be hurt, be triumphant, and swell emotionally. Moreover, and surely most important, Streisand evolved a new way to use songs in film.

The story of *Yentl* is in the ancient line of woman-disguised-as-man narrative that doubtless antedates the *Arabian Nights* where it occurs. *Yentl*, the only daughter of a loving father, is intellectually ambitious and is not resigned to the female status that orthodox Judaism assigns her. She wants to study Torah, a privilege reserved to males. Her dying father foresees trouble for his rebellious child, and it begins at his grave when she—a girl!—insists on speaking the Kaddish, the prayer for the dead. (This moment was one of Streisand's scarce directorial slips. The play made much more of this heroic moment for *Yentl*.) She then cuts her hair, dons men's clothes, moves to another town, and, under the name Anshel, is accepted in a first-rank yeshiva.

In that yeshiva is another student,

Avigdor, with whom she falls, very secretly, in love. He is engaged to Hadass, a rich man's daughter, but he feels a disturbingly warm friendship for Anshel. (An echo here of *Twelfth Night*, where Orsino is disturbingly attracted to Cesario, who, we're aware, is really a girl.) Plot complications break off Avigdor's engagement to Hadass and force Anshel to marry Hadass in order to keep Avigdor from leaving town. Everything works out in the end—for Hadass and Avigdor, anyway—and *Yentl*, as *Yentl*, is off to a brave new life in America.

Nothing that this plot evokes is used seriously. Everything is used as a prop for Streisand's virtuosity; but, since she has the virtuosity, the exploitation is, in performance terms, justified.

Her face never looked better. We all know that, anthropometrically speaking, there are no such absolutes as Jewish features. We also know that, by general acceptance, there are Jewish features. To deny this is to scant the most important element of Streisand's film success: that a woman with a Jewish face—or, if you like, a "Jewish" face—could rise to stardom without a nose job or a name change. And it would also scant the fact that she

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Carmen. The electrifying Spanish dancer, Antonio Gades, designs a dance production of *Carmen* and re-lives the story with the dancer who plays the role. Hot and humid.

The Dresser. Albert Finney is superb as a famous old actor pulling himself together to give a final performance of Lear, aided by his dresser, Tom Courtenay, who is deftly affecting.

Richard Pryor Here and Now. Another film record of a stage performance, raunchier than ever, not quite as funny as before, but still much more than a long stand-up act.

The Right Stuff. Chuck Yeager and the Mercury seven. Good enough—most startling in the way the facts correspond to film fictions about such men.

SK

looks her best as Yentl. Her features help her as they have never done before, not even in *Funny Girl* and *Funny Lady* where she played Fanny Brice. (Brice was conventionally pretty—at least when she wanted to be.) Here Streisand is supposed to be one of a community, and looks it. This is not to ordain a future for her exclusively of Jewish roles, still in *Yentl* everything around her supports her looks, as against those films in which she behaved, and others behaved, as if she looked just like Miss Malted Milk from down the block.

The songs are handled in a way that I've never heard before: they are treated as private commentaries between Yentl and us, not musical numbers listened to by others in the cast. Often she starts a song alone, visibly singing, then moves through a scene with others while the song continues on the soundtrack under her dialogue with them; then the camera returns to her alone, visibly singing, to finish the song. A few lame-brains have complained that Streisand is now so conceited that she won't give a musical number to anyone else. How often does a diarist allow others to write entries in her diary?

The music is by Michel Legrand who has been striving for imaginative use of song in film ever since *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (1964). The lyrics, by Alan and Marilyn Bergman, successfully rise above Tin Pan Alley stock. I doubt that there will be singles hits from *Yentl*: this is theater music, integrated with the performance. As such, it's often moving and always apt, and the interwoven "private" use of it gives the whole picture an extra, novel dimension.

STREISAND'S direction is lucid enough without being distinguished, and sometimes leans on better film-musical moments. The last sequence, on a ship, is so imitative of a *Funny Girl* sequence that it must have been designed as a reminder rather than lifted as a derivation. She has directed herself as actress very tightly and precisely. For instance, the moment when she is accepted by the yeshiva is handled in a throwaway style—"I'm a student," she says quietly—that sings.

And she does equally well by her fellow actors. Mandy Patinkin, who was splendid as Daniel's father in *Daniel*, is Avigdor and almost bursts the seams of the character with conviction. Var-

ious bearded elders, played by Nehemiah Persoff, Steven Hill, and David de Keyser, keep well this side of Rod Steigerism, which is a blessing. The one lump in the cast is Amy Irving, inflexible and dull. David Watkin, the cinema-

tographer, whose achievements run from *The Knack* to *Chariots of Fire*, seems stumped by Irving. Yentl is not Watkin's best work, anyway, but then the camera is here to provide settings, not evoke realities.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Carmen Without Chorus, Chekhov Without Walls

The war of the ancients and the moderns is raging again as a result of two unusual new theater productions, Peter Brook's version of *Carmen* at the Vivian Beaumont in New York and Lucian Pintilie's reinterpretation of Chekhov's *The Seagull* at the Minneapolis Tyrone Guthrie Theater. The trouble with these theater controversies, as with Marxist quarrels in the 1930s and neoconservative polemics today, is their unfortunate tendency to make judgments of quality conform to ideological prejudices. In case you don't already know my own theater prejudices, let me declare them again: I believe that a director has both a right and an obligation to experiment with fresh approaches to established texts as long as he tries to open a new path to the heart of the work rather than exhibit his own inventiveness.

Having thus cleared my throat, I must nevertheless admit an ambiguous attitude toward these two adventurous productions, beginning with Brook's *La Tragédie de Carmen*. One thing at least has been accomplished by this show. It has knocked all the talk about the structural inadequacies of the Beaumont into a cocked hat. With the most economical means, Brook has created a space that can be used there for virtually any kind of production, simply by removing a few seats, and extending the stage into the auditorium. This creates an atmosphere of intimacy at the same time that it instantly improves acoustics and sight lines. The space is a circular dirt floor, intersected by crude unstained wooden panels that half-conceal the musicians, while functioning for exits and entrances. The roughness of the setting provides a striking contrast to the plush upholstery of the auditorium, not to mention the plushly upholstered audience (another contrast is the price of the

tickets at the Beaumont—\$40—as compared with the \$8 top Brook charges at his own theater in Paris). But no matter how impressive the environment, it is not sufficient, finally, to conceal the limitations of the event.

The beginning is promising. A bunch of burlap rags on the dirt floor begins to move, a hand emerges turning tarot cards on a rope circle and sprinkling the area with black powder: the rags take human form as Carmen, the gypsy sorceress. A sultry unwashed beauty, she vamps a taciturn Don José by rolling a fat cigarette on her bare stocking, sucking it, and throwing him suggestive looks. When Micaela protests, she taunts her, squeezes her cheeks, then fights her to the ground, and slices her face with a razor. Enter Lieutenant Zuniga. Carmen holds him at bay with a knife, knees him in the balls, and pitches dirt in his eyes. This Carmen is no sloe-eyed soubrette bedizened with lace and mantillas, but a tough broad from the streets, part-time hooker in Lillas Pastia's stable of whores, with a particularly strong appetite for food and sex.

Brook has reduced the opera to eighty minutes without intermission, cut the choruses, supporting roles, and all but fourteen members of the orchestra, and stripped the story down to its bare essentials, meanwhile turning the characters (including some from Prosper Mérimée's novel) into hard-boiled eggs out of a naturalistic saucepan. This, in theory, is a brilliant conception, and Brooks executes it brilliantly. The trouble is with the recalcitrant material itself. Whatever *Carmen* is, as an opera or a literary work, it is not a "tragédie," but rather a melodrama garnished with local color. Brook's reduction succeeds in complicating character, but it simplifies the already rather absurd plot, the

bony structure of which is hardly sturdy enough for such penetrating radiology. In outline *Carmen* is about a jealous soldier infatuated with a promiscuous gypsy, who slices up anyone who ogles his girl, and inevitably kills the girl herself. Take away Bizet's lush orchestration, his spirited choruses, the sunlit splendor of Seville, and the excitement of the bullring, and all you are left with is the outline, a silly anecdote of considerable implausibility.

Brook has directed *Carmen* with five separate casts. In the company I saw, the part of Carmen is sung and performed well by a fine black actress-singer (Cynthia Clarey), but Don José is such a wimpy creature, baby-faced, expressionless, that his uncharacteristic

temper makes him look like Henry Al-drich on a rampage. Finding Zuniga embracing Carmen, he forces him to the floor and strangles him. After Escamillo moves into Carmen's orbit, Don José tries to stab him with his knife (passes which the toreador Escamillo successfully dodges with his cape). When Carmen's husband, Garcia, appears, demanding his conjugal rights, José rewards his request with a shiv in his ribs. And for a finale, he shoves a knife in Carmen's back as they both kneel on a dusty road after Escamillo (in Brook's interpolation) has been killed in the bullring. Although Brook has directed this massacre with his customary brilliance (the staging of Garcia's death is as fine an example of casual violence as anything I have seen on stage since Mike Nichol's treatment of Carlyle's murders in *Streamers*), the accumulated slaughter ultimately becomes both ludicrous and wearing: Charlie Chaplin, in his version, at least had the sense to make fun of it. It is clearly Brook's intention to rescue *Carmen* from the tedious artificiality of grand opera, but when I looked over my shoulder at the audience I saw so many snoozing husbands I thought I was back at the Met.

PINTILIE'S *Seagull* at the Guthrie does not allow one to nod. The ideas come at you like a shower of meteors. In Pintilie's cinematic approach, the play begins with the final act, and then goes into flashback, as perceived through the mind of a hallucinating Treplev. In the tradition of his Rumanian countryman, Andrei Serban (and his teacher, Peter Brook), Pintilie gives us Chekhov without walls—a glittering dreamscape of memory and desire. Radu Boruzescu's setting is a gorgeous environment—a burnished metallic mirror which becomes transparent to reveal a ghostly Nina surrounded by a forest of birches (and later Treplev's improvised stage covered with twigs and branches)—and Miruna Boruzescu's gauzy lace, linen, crinoline, and velvet costumes, festooned with boas and ostrich-feathered hats, are equally shimmering.

Whatever is implicit in the play, Pintilie makes explicit. When Irina admits she has never read a word of her son's work, Treplev is behind her to absorb the insult. When Nina returns to the house, Treplev mounts her in a clumsy effort to consummate his love. ("Give me a glass of water," says the unre-

sponsive girl after he rolls off her, as if asking for a postcoital cigarette.) Treplev's first suicide attempt is performed before the audience. And when Treplev catalogues his mother's faults ("She's a psychological case"), he speaks the indictment within earshot as Irina floats lazily on a swing.

"How lovely it used to be—do you remember?" asks the distraught Nina, and the stage transforms in preparation for the beginning of the play—and plays right through to the end, repeating the fourth act in its entirety, creating a rather tedious sense of déjà vu. At the climax, Nina is surrounded by Irina and Masha, who stain her face with black makeup, dress her in a feathered seagull costume, and crucify her on Treplev's stage as it trolleys behind the panels immersed in fog and smoke, with Nina screaming, to the accompaniment of high-pitched electronics, "Now I am a real actress." Having witnessed this, there's nothing left for Treplev to do but burn his manuscript and end his miserable life.

SOME OF these interpolations are perverse, some ridiculous, but this *Seagull* nevertheless describes an important symbolic arc for a theater which, under pressure from subscribers, has recently shown signs of reverting to its conservative past. The only thing its artistic director, Liviu Ciulei, really needs from the Guthrie past is its abandoned permanent company, because the weakest aspect of the event was the performance. No matter how brilliantly produced, *The Seagull* belongs to actors and cannot succeed without an ensemble. This production collected a disparate group of strangers together for the first time and asked them to become a family in five short weeks. Irina brought vocally limited and neuroathenic luggage from the Actors Studio; Polina was a giggling yenta; Masha reminded me of the battle-axe Domina in *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum*; Trigorin was performing for TV; Nina was mannered; only David Pierce as Treplev successfully combined the phantasmagoric dream with the passionate reality. "I didn't understand a word of it," says Dorn about Treplev's play, "But I enjoyed watching it. You were very sincere and the scenery was lovely." That's as good a judgment as we'll get on this bizarre and irritating, yet always absorbing and provocative experiment.

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WHY DEMOCRACY MAKES ECONOMIC SENSE

The Rise and Decline of Nations by Mancur Olson

(Yale University Press, 276 pp., \$14.95)

BY ROBERT B. REICH

THE way people work together to produce goods and services is intimately tied to the way they set and pursue public goals. Indeed, the notion that the economic and political spheres of our life can be separated is relatively new. The very word "economics" was not firmly established until 1890, when Alfred Marshall wrote his *Principles of Economics*. Before then the term was "political economy"—with the adjective serving as a reminder of the "economy's" origins and effects. The entire field branched off in the late eighteenth century from moral philosophy, the study of citizens' rights, duties, and obligations. In earlier eras it seemed impossible to consider economic relationships in isolation from their specific political and social contexts.

Mancur Olson has sought to weave these intellectual threads back together. In a work published in 1965, *The Logic of Collective Action*, Olson undertook to explain group behavior as a predictable product of individuals' separate economic choices. The theory rested on the economist's standard model of human nature: individuals know their interests and act rationally to serve them. Olson observed that groups, however, fail to fit the model; collective goals are seldom rationally pursued. Why is this? He hypothesized that a group of people who join together to act in their common interest often cannot ensure that every member will do his part. This problem is most acute when group effort benefits all members, and there is no way to exclude those who decline to contribute to the common cause. The rational strategy for each individual is to let others do the work and thereby get a "free ride." Unless the group

somehow can allocate the benefits of its efforts according to each member's contribution, or else coerce its members into taking responsibility, the group's goals will be sabotaged by the rationally self-interested decisions of its members. Thus picket lines make all workers participate in a strike, dues are withheld from union members' paychecks, and citizens are obligated to pay for public services through taxes.

Now, in *The Rise and Decline of Nations*, Olson extends this "logic of collective action" to explain the fates of national economies. The task here is a larger version of the previous one—to account for national economic performance in terms of group behavior. He begins by asserting several political implications of his basic logic. Since broad and dispersed interests find it hard to organize for political action, there is little hope that comprehensive bargaining among a nation's politically active groups will yield results that make everyone better off. The likelihood, rather, is that small, narrow interest groups will engineer a redistribution of benefits toward themselves and away from dispersed interests. Moreover, since people discover the benefits of group action and organize themselves to obtain them only gradually, a stable society will steadily accumulate more and more of these special-interest groups. And even after a long period of stability, small groups will continue to have disproportionate political influence.

Olson's logic has implications for the nation's economy. The means by which special-interest groups redistribute national wealth to themselves may reduce the society's overall efficiency. If the special-interest group succeeds in raising some price or wage, or in taxing some type of income at lower rates than other income, the extra resources that are diverted into the favored area add less to society's output than they otherwise would. On the other hand, the special-interest group may seek to es-

tablish a cartel in order to reduce output and thereby enjoy a higher price, and in so doing it imposes additional inefficiencies on society as a whole. Of course, to the extent that politically active groups are very large—encompassing many diverse interests—a large part of the costs of these sorts of inefficiencies will be borne by members of the group. Thus "encompassing" organizations, as Olson calls them, will have some concern for the overall prosperity of the society in which they operate.

Finally, the collusive activities of special-interest groups will slow a society's growth by reducing the rate at which resources are reallocated from one activity or industry to another in response to new technologies and conditions. Indeed, the special-interest groups may simply block technological change. Given their often crowded agendas and complex bargaining procedures, they often are slow to embrace even those innovations that promise to enrich their members. Furthermore, by intensifying distributional struggles, increasing regulatory complexity, and encouraging the primacy of political competition, special-interest groups siphon a society's talents and energies away from the production of goods and focus them instead on winning the distributional game.

Olson employs these ideas to explain the postwar "economic miracles" in the nations that were defeated or occupied in World War II, particularly Japan and West Germany. In Germany, Hitler had done away with independent unions as well as other dissenting groups; the Allies eviscerated cartels and organizations with right-wing origins. Japan's militaristic regime had suppressed left-wing organizations; the Allies cracked down on monopolies and purged an entire generation of the business elite. In other words, in both nations, violence and repression had wiped the slate clean of special-interest groups by the end of the 1940s, and thereby

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opened the way to rapid growth. On the other hand, the United States and Great Britain—countries with comparatively long and undisturbed histories of democratic freedom—have experienced slower growth in the postwar era. Both nations are rife with special-interest groups.

Olson brings the same analysis to a comparison among the states, discerning a strong and systematically negative relationship between the length of time a state has been settled and its rate of growth. In the formerly Confederate states, the development of many kinds of special-interest groups (like labor unions and oligopolies) has been severely limited by defeat in the Civil War, Reconstruction, and racial turmoil and discrimination. Accordingly, these states have been growing more rapidly than the northeastern and midwestern states in recent years. The more newly settled western states are also enjoying rapid growth, again, Olson argues, due to their comparative lack of special-interest groups.

Olson then forays into history—Britain in the sixteenth century, Holland in the seventeenth, France in the eighteenth, Japan's Meiji restoration; then to various patterns of social organization—the Indian caste system, the British class structure, South African apartheid; then to the contemporary paradox of stagflation. Everywhere Olson looks he finds confirmation of his theory that long-term stability breeds special-interest groups that seek to preserve their benefits at the cost of general economic stagnation. Prices become less flexible, resources become stuck, innovation declines. Periodic revolution to eliminate special-interest groups, or steady repression to block their emergence, unleashes economic growth.

WHAT IS one to make of all this? It is perhaps too easy to take issue with much of the evidence Olson invokes to bolster his thesis. For example, the eradication of special-interest groups is neither adequate nor indeed necessary to explain much of the postwar economic dynamism of Germany or Japan. The devastation of physical capital (combined in Japan's case with relative industrial retardation before the war) left these nations with very low productivity levels on which to build. Both countries therefore could show enormous proportional strides as they caught up with other, less ravaged

nations. Such advances were fueled by the shift of labor from agriculture to industry—a shift well under way in many other industrialized nations—and by the simple expedient of adopting technologies developed elsewhere. The recent rapid growth of southern and western states can be similarly explained. Starting from a much lower level of productivity than northeastern states, the Sun Belt has played catch up to older industrial regions; this process of economic homogenization has been accelerated by generous defense spending and public works projects during the postwar era. One can also conjure similar explanations, having little or nothing to do with the prevalence of interest-group politics, for many of the other historical phenomena Olson discusses.

Still, Olson's is an ambitious theoretical undertaking. He has sought to forge a link between microeconomics (explaining prices, wages, and resource allocation) and macroeconomics (explaining aggregates of income, employment, and overall output). He has done so by focusing on the critical issues of change and adaptation within a national economy. For Olson, robust competition is not simply a means of ensuring efficiency of allocation among alternative endeavors; it is also a spur to innovation. When groups collude to redistribute benefits toward themselves in the near term, they block change and narrow options, imposing large costs on society in the future. When such combinations dominate markets throughout the economy, no macroeconomic policy can put things right.

Such an economics is grounded in social organization—how people organize themselves for work and politics. As such, it assumes that variations in the economic performance of different nations, or of the same nation at different times, can best be understood not by reference to universal principles governing supply, demand, the supply of money, taxing, and public spending, but through attention to the patterns of group association which change over time. Simply put, Olson has sought to move economics away from the apolitical and ahistorical abstractions which now dominate the field, back toward the study of specific political and social institutions from which economics emerged as a separate science. But he also has sought to give economics a solid and verifiable theoretical founda-

tion, based on what he views as a fundamental conflict between the interests of the individual and the collective interests of any group. His work is more important for the new social lenses through which he views economic phenomena than it is for the specific hypotheses he develops.

Ironically, it is precisely this strength of Olson's work—its relentless drive to explain, through the economic logic of group behavior, the social essence of a nation—which is ultimately its undoing. For by extending his theory to its outermost limits, Olson exposes the poverty of his underlying premises about human nature, and about the purpose and meaning of politics. And in so doing, he reveals a great deal about what is wrong with the modern study of both politics and economics.

FOR OLSON, political activities, like market transactions, are means through which people satisfy strictly personal wants. Interest-group politics is the result of people acting rationally, according to the same economic rules that are supposed to guide the invisible hand. The moral dimension of such behavior has no place in Olson's theory. The problem, as he sees it, is that while in the marketplace demands are mediated through competition for scarce resources, in politics the demands of special-interest groups are not mediated, but are forwarded, often covertly, through exclusive channels to legislative committees, agencies, and bureaus. Politics becomes a pipeline to the public trough.

The notion of politics as a pipeline is not new. In some respects it owes its intellectual origins to the economist Joseph Schumpeter, who sought to dispense with the "classical doctrine" of democracy, and its presumption that people are capable of acting with the common good in mind. Instead, Schumpeter saw democracy as "an institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for people's votes."

As the American welfare state has burgeoned, furthermore, the economic theory of politics has gained adherents. It seems to offer an explanation both for the failure of the Great Society to eradicate poverty, and for the poor economic performance of the United States in recent years. According to this

view, as developed most succinctly by Michael Crozier, Samuel Huntington, and Joji Watanuki in 1975 in *The Crisis of Democracy*, popular expectations and group demands on government reached extraordinary levels during the "democratic surge" of the 1960s, resulting in a vast expansion of government responsibilities; not all of these commitments could be fulfilled. The only way out of this morass, according to some of these theorists, is to reduce government responsiveness to these demands—to amend the Constitution to limit public spending and taxes, revert to the gold standard to discipline monetary policy, and devise new governmental arrangements like public corporations and independent authorities, which are less vulnerable to democratic politics. These theorists of "democratic overload" assume that democracy must be saved from its own excesses, by dramatically reducing access to state benefits, or—which amounts to the same thing—by reducing the discretion of public officials to respond to political demands.

MANCUR OLSON'S prescription is consistent with this tradition of thought. But rather than reduce political access generally, Olson merely would have us reduce the influence of special-interest groups on the political process. Violence and repression are a means of eliminating special-interest groups, at least for a time; but Olson is not so pessimistic as to conclude that economic growth requires a blood bath. He seeks instead a cultural and ideological transformation. He expresses the hope that the schools and the mass media will create a widespread public antipathy to special-interest groups. The remedy would follow quite naturally from this change in attitudes.

A society with the consensus that has just been described might choose the most obvious and far-reaching remedy: it might simply repeal all special-interest legislation or regulation and at the same time apply rigorous antitrust laws to every type of cartel or collusion that used its power to obtain prices and wages above competitive levels.

Then, presumably, the society would go on to alter irrevocably its political arrangements so that special interests would be prevented ever again from holding sway.

Olson proffers the ideal of a state devoid of special-interest politics. It is a

state whose economy once again can be naturally adaptable and innovative. He does not discuss it in detail, but one can infer its key features. No organization stands between the individual and the government except perhaps large encompassing organizations which effectively neutralize partisan appeals. The only small groups are households and firms, which relate to one another almost exclusively through the market. Social relations are virtually coextensive with market relations. Workers no longer are organized in industry-wide unions; wage-bargaining occurs instead at the level of the firm. A household's income depends on the market value of its members' labor. The government's chief responsibility, apart from providing for national defense and certain public goods like highways, is to police the market in order to guard against the possibility that any group of individuals, households, or firms might seek to distort it through collusion.

Some, no doubt, find this sort of society attractive. But one might challenge seriously both its economic neutrality and its capacity to sustain a robust democracy. Is it possible to divorce the

state from the economy? Can there be an apolitical economics? After all, there exists an infinite array of alternative market outcomes, each equally efficient, depending upon the initial distribution of resources in the society. And that initial distribution is maintained and enforced not primarily by specific regulations blocking market entry into certain profit-making activities, or by discrete price-fixing arrangements and restrictive practices within the private sector; it is maintained by determinations about the nature and form of rights in property, the allocation of public services, and the rules of liability and contract governing society as a whole.

These deeper judgments, framed by courts and legislatures, are neutral on their face. No special interests are explicitly deemed their beneficiaries. But their consequences are profoundly distributive. Different groups of people, facing different circumstances, are affected by them in different ways. One's access to clean air, police protection, and safe working conditions, for example, is apt to vary substantially, depending upon one's geographic community, income, race, and other charac-

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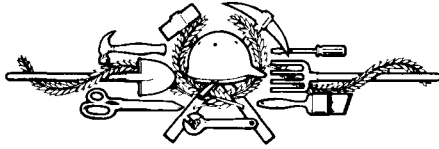


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teristics. While "membership" in a geographic community, racial group, or income class is not the sort of "membership" Olson has in mind, these less voluntary associations nevertheless shape the deeper pattern of rights and social privileges in modern societies.

As people experiencing similar disadvantages come to understand their common interests and exert their collective political power, these more fundamental rules, and the distributions to which they correspond, may be amended over time. To dismantle the system of interest-group politics, therefore, is to freeze the particular distribution prevailing at the time that the dismantling occurs.

The mechanics of democracy, moreover, are at stake. By positing a society in which nothing mediates between state and individual but encompassing organizations, Olson would effectively cripple democratic institutions. Interest groups are conduits for democratic participation. They are, as Robert A. Dahl has shown, seedbeds for democratic opposition. Because they create centers of power, influence, and mutual support that are independent of the state, interest groups help to check state power. Totalitarian regimes are quick to dismantle special-interest groups. Hitler banned independent unions, trade associations, professional associations, and civic groups; the Soviets cannot tolerate an independent trade union movement in Eastern Europe.

IS ECONOMIC growth inconsistent with robust interest-group politics? It may indeed be, if politics is understood primarily as an instrument for appropriating shares of national income. The economic theory of politics, which attends only to the outcomes of self-interested actors' political behavior, ignores the effects of political action upon the actors themselves. Yet it is precisely through broadly political activities—within local trade unions, civic groups, grass-roots political movements, town meetings, professional associations, parent-teacher associations, chambers of commerce, shop-floor organizations, charitable organizations, and election campaigns—that individuals discover the subtler dimensions of their own needs and learn about the needs of others. They begin to understand the relationship between self and society; the encounter itself shapes their social values. If political organization is

understood as a source of social values as well as a conduit for political demands, there is no inherent conflict between interest-group politics and economic growth.

Economists generally decline to specify how preferences are formed. It is enough, for most analytical purposes, to assume that people simply have wants and display them through the choices they make. But what of those wants that people cannot or prefer not to express in market terms—patriotism, social justice, the well-being of family and friends, or certain aspects of the natural environment? Schumpeter and his intellectual descendants assume that such preferences, while perhaps difficult to identify and to measure, exist prior to and outside of any social interaction. Social institutions neither create nor alter them. The group interest is simply the sum of its individual members' preferences. Individuals engage in political activity precisely in order to maximize their pre-existing self-interests.

A CONTRARY view is that political preferences embody values which are conditioned by social experience. Within political organizations people reconsider and revise perspectives and opinions. Common interests are discovered. Disagreements and inconsistencies force individuals to balance and rank their wants. What previously had been assumed to be solely personal concerns are found to be shared ones, and this discovery often empowers participants to act upon them. Thus individual values are transformed into social values which extend beyond the confines of the group. Collective purposes are forged. Political movements are born. But even more important, through the group experience a social morality is defined and refined. Groups create citizens.

The economic theory of politics, which casts groups as mere aggregations of atomized individuals, posits no effective public restraint upon selfish conspiracies of group members against the rest of us. The greater the number of special-interest groups, the more collusion against the common good. But the social theory of politics, which sees in these groups the vehicles by which citizens come to understand common interests, suggests that the most effective restraint upon selfish demands against the state may be the under-

standing and sophistication that derive from political experiences within such groups. The wider and more active is the public's participation in politics, therefore, the sounder and deeper is the potential political commitment to the common good, including economic growth. "Economic man" enters politics only to further pre-existing strictly personal goals. "Political man" has goals formed in part from his social experience. "Economic man," if not restrained, inevitably exploits his fellows and stifles the economy; he cannot be trusted with real democracy. "Political man" can at least potentially embrace general prosperity as a common cause, and lend his energies to achieving it.

Mancur Olson offers abundant evidence for the first view. But it is possible that many of the phenomena he describes can be explained more fully by the second. In particular, the poor economic performance of the United States and Great Britain during the past fifteen years as compared to Japan and West Germany—above and apart from any relative deceleration attributable to the high levels of productivity with which the United States and Britain began the period—may be understood to reflect the fact that their economic systems are neither sufficiently democratic nor sufficiently authoritarian to foster quick growth. Both the United States and Britain stand awkwardly poised between two political alternatives, both of which promise faster growth: economic democracy, on the one hand, and economic authoritarianism on the other.

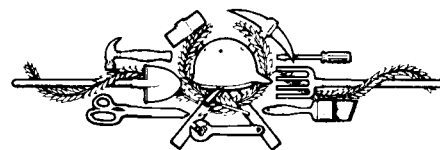
A political theory of economics would predict that the process of economic change—which necessarily imposes losses on some people and confers gains on others—generates essentially three categories of political response. First, those who stand to lose most will seek to block change, particularly in periods of economic contraction when new jobs and industries are not readily available to replace the old. They will seek legislation to stop runaway plants, regulations to prohibit the introduction of new technologies, government-financed bailouts, limitations on foreign investment by domestic firms, tariffs and quotas or informal "understandings" by which foreign firms hold back their wares, legislation to ensure that goods sold domestically contain a minimum percentage of parts manufactured domestically.

These efforts at blocking change often

will be successful in capitalist democracies. Declining industries typically have far greater political power than emerging ones. By virtue of the declining industries' size and age, whole cities or entire regions—suppliers, distributors, independent contractors, and service businesses, as well as the industries' own employees and shareholders—often have grown dependent on them. These dependents represent a powerful constituency with well-established political connections. By contrast, emerging industries, almost by definition, are small and new. They are apt to have very little political clout. Moreover, many measures to prop up the status quo—like trade barriers and special tax benefits—do not entail active and visible government intervention. No bureaucrats intrude on corporate discretion. Legislators vote no budgets. Those costs do not appear on any national accounts, and those who bear them are seldom aware of the source or extent of the burdens.

THESE blocking policies often seem preferable to massive unemployment and the destruction of communities. But these same policies retard future economic growth by constricting the flow of resources into more productive uses. As Olson shows, they discourage new investment, stifle new businesses, abort new jobs. They increase the costs of supplies. They dampen innovation. They fuel inflation. Thus they even accelerate the economic decline.

In recent years the United States, along with every other major industrialized nation, has experienced slower economic growth. Calls for industrial preservation are growing louder everywhere, and the calls have been extremely loud in the United States. Since 1969 the American steel industry has been more or less shielded against competition. So too with American textiles, apparel, footwear, and televisions. For the last three years Japanese automobile manufacturers have "voluntarily" restricted their exports to the United States, and that restriction in all likelihood will be continued and tightened in the years ahead. A score of protectionist bills have been introduced in Congress in recent months. American manufacturers, meanwhile, are furiously filing complaints with the government, alleging foreign "dumping" of products in the America market at prices below



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their cost of production. This rearguard action has made it even more difficult for the American economy to adjust to the new realities of international competition.

HOW CAN nations overcome their bias against economic change? One way is simply to reduce or eliminate political organization and political access, particularly for those who bear the brunt of the dislocations associated with economic change. Olson points to Taiwan as a "prototypical" example of fast growth and low inflation, due, he says, to "Taiwan's nearly complete absence of special-interest organization." He also singles out South Korea and Singapore for special mention.

It is no accident that these nations lack special-interest organizations. The South Korean government periodically declares all political opposition to be illegal. Those outside the ruling coalition are effectively disenfranchised. Demonstrations expressing dissatisfaction, such as those at Kwangju in the spring of 1980, result in thousands being jailed or killed. The government of Singapore continues to bar most political opposition. Taiwan has no free press, and only a facade of multiparty representation; it periodically jails dissidents.

Nor, in many respects, is modern-day Japan a model of robust national politics. The burden of industrial change there falls disproportionately on subcontractors, women, and retired people, whose economic futures are highly uncertain. Many of these people leave the work force for considerable periods, especially when Japanese industry makes a major shift in production. Others find temporary work in Japan's labor-heavy retail operations. The costs of industrial change also are borne by marginal industries, like commercial fishing, which have been jeopardized by environmental hazards. The political coalition in favor of industrial change is sufficiently well-entrenched to withstand the special pleadings of any industry but agriculture. The powerful economic ministries, in turn, are run by permanent administrative vice ministers. These leading bureaucrats, and the business leaders with whom they attended Tokyo University years before, form an almost impenetrable "old boy" network that in effect governs Japan. And this network is reinforced by the various offices of the Ministry of Inter-

national Trade and Industry that are paired with officially sanctioned trade associations for each industry.

Groups outside this system occasionally shout their disaffection. The violent demonstrations against the new Tokyo Airport and the government's nuclear ship project, and the campaign against industrial pollution, are cases in point. But these are sporadic outbursts. They may result in some concessions, as when the city of Tokyo abruptly decided in favor of cleaner air, but they have little effect on the daily process of politics and economic administration in Japan. Japan, for example, was slow to recognize the environmental hazards of rapid industrialization. The government took no action to reduce mercury contamination until years after scientific evidence established a link to Minamata disease. Rapid industrial change, in other words, is relatively easy to achieve when the leaders who plan it have no serious worries about politics, when economic planning is made by stable elites who simply need not take account of how the burdens of economic change are borne by the less advantaged.

THE THIRD political response to economic change is more difficult to arrange than either of the former, and is more admirable than both. The only way to forestall political coalitions intent on blocking economic change, while at the same time preserving democratic institutions, is to ensure that the burdens and the benefits of economic change are allocated in ways that most people deem to be fair. And to achieve this sort of consensus, a nation would have to democratize its system of economic planning. Economic democracy might take the form of devices like shop-floor participation in decisions governing plant and working conditions, labor-management committees to plot company investment strategies, community and regional planning boards to determine local development objectives, and national bargaining over wages and prices. The point is not to politicize every economic issue, but to recognize that every important economic choice is by nature political, and therefore to open up political channels in which the substance of economic change can be debated explicitly.

No capitalist democracy has extended the concept of economic democracy very far, but several of the more suc-

cessful trading partners of the United States have, over the past several decades, experimented with a wide variety of approaches. For example, the vast majority of workers in the United States have no financial stake in their companies, nor any formal means of participating in company decisions. But in West Germany employees are represented on workers' councils and on supervisory boards. Austrian labor unions participate directly in management decisions. Even in Japan, whose formal politics is relatively insular, employees participate in companies through elaborate systems of consultation at all levels of the firm. Indeed, in many respects, Japan's system of bottom-up economic planning is far more democratic than its top-down politics, ironically giving Japan a double advantage. Of course this advantage is enjoyed primarily by those safely within the large- and medium-sized firms; Japan works, then, but hardly as an ideal for the United States.

This is not to suggest that companies in continental Europe and Japan are models of labor-management harmony; they are not. The difference is that workers in these nations understand that their fates are tied to the profitability and competitiveness of their firms. Therefore they bargain for change—retraining programs, relocation assistance, new investment in plant and equipment. Their counterparts in the United States and Great Britain, meanwhile, seek to maintain the status quo because change threatens their economic security. Similarly, while in Great Britain and the United States, macroeconomic policies designed to restrain inflation impose unemployment on the segments of the population least able to cope with it, wage and price increases in many other industrial nations follow guidelines established in national negotiations. Smaller-scale groups—local unions and industry associations—participate indirectly through their representatives. In Norway, Sweden, and Denmark economy-wide "framework" agreements are formally negotiated between employer and labor federations. In Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Japan representatives of the major business and labor confederations conduct ongoing negotiations. These national bargaining arenas, and the more localized ones on which they are built, provide all segments of the population with highly visible opportunities to clarify goals, articulate demands, and nego-

tiate trade-offs among inflation, unemployment, and structural adjustment.

One indication of the comparative effectiveness of these various participatory mechanisms is found in the distribution of national income and wealth. By 1976 (the latest year for which such data are available) the poorest 20 percent of the population in the fast-growing nations fared better than in the slow-growing ones. In Japan, the poorest fifth received 7.9 percent of after-tax national income. In West Germany the comparable figure was 6.5 percent. In Great Britain, the poorest fifth received 6.3 percent of national income, and in the United States the share was only 4.5 percent. Indeed, of twelve industrialized nations, the United States ranks ninth in post-tax income equality. Of fourteen industrial nations, the United States ranks fourteenth in the extent of social insurance coverage.

Other data also tend to stand Olson on his head. For example, by comparison with other, more vigorous economies, a very small proportion of the working population in the United States is unionized. In 1980, only 21 percent of the American wage and salary earners belonged to a union. The figure was 33 percent in Japan and 42 percent in West Germany. In certain respects, moreover, Americans appear to be less politically active than their counterparts in other industrial nations. Comparatively few Americans actually take to the polls during national elections. In 1980, Ronald Reagan won the Presidency with the votes of only 28 percent of the potential electorate.

By the same token, the United States and Great Britain both claim some of the largest encompassing organizations within any modern society—if we take the term “encompassing” to mean large organizations that integrate a great deal of economic (and political) activity. By 1972, thirty British firms each employed more than forty thousand people. The five other European Economic Community nations, together comprising three times Britain’s population, shared among themselves about this same number of giant enterprises. The centralization of economic power in the United States is equally dramatic. By 1982, the top two hundred non-financial firms in the United States accounted for just under 40 percent of all nonfinancial business assets. These modern-day economic Leviathans participate actively in politics.

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Of course, these data are only suggestive. Yet together they frame a picture of two societies, both of which have experienced comparatively poor economic performance over the last fifteen years, and both of which possess relatively few democratic mechanisms for ensuring that the burdens and benefits of economic change are allocated in a politically acceptable way. Both nations draw a relatively rigid delineation between economic decision-making—whether within the government or within large corporations—and demo-

cratic institutions. Mancur Olson, to be sure, correctly observes that both nations possess a wide array of legal impediments to economic change: licensing restrictions, professional associations, regulatory barriers, trade barriers. But if the argument developed here is correct, these various restrictions have grown up, not in consequence of long-standing democratic institutions in these nations, but because of the inadequacy of these democratic institutions to deal effectively with the social dimension of economic change.

Hall, where a Jewish character pictures himself as he thinks a WASP grandmother must see him: earlocks, flat hat, gabardine, the complete, immeasurably alien Jew. Roth holds up a similar stereotype, but breezier, more secular, closer to the Jewish joke, although he does this not to represent anxiety as Allen does, but to subvert and generalize the tyranny of the figure.

Most of us live locked in the world of our fathers, whether we oppose or obey them, as the Karamazov brothers and Clarissa Harlowe knew all too well. Many writers, and not only Jewish ones, use their backgrounds as material, reach for what Roth calls their "slice of the American piety," or any other piety. Zuckerman, free of his earnest, demanding father, mourns for the lavish troubles he has lost:

No new Newark was going to spring up again for Zuckerman, not like the first one: no fathers like those pioneering Jewish fathers bursting with taboos, no sons like their sons boiling with temptations, no loyalties, no ambitions, no rebellions, no capitulations, no clashes quite so convulsive again. Never again to feel such tender emotion and such a desire to escape . . .

Here, as in "The Conversion of the Jews," Roth has the irony under gentle but firm command: Zuckerman's thought is both accurate and sentimental, its truth clothed in a characteristically excited yearning for the mess he has gotten out of. He doesn't really want it back, he just doesn't know what to do without it.

Roth is not Zuckerman, of course, but he doesn't simply separate himself from his alter egoist. He brilliantly blurs and complicates the tracks which lead from him to his fiction, so that now the tracks seem unmistakable, and now they vanish or go nowhere. This means Roth can pounce upon those who exaggerate the resemblance between author and character, and smile at the thought of critics scrupulously missing it, worried as we are about personae and points of view and other obliquities of narration. "Where Emma Bovary had read too many romances of her period," Zuckerman writes in *My Life as a Man*, "it would seem that I had read too much of the criticism of mine. . . ." On the contrary. Zuckerman and Roth have read just the right amount. They are waiting for us at every turn. "It seemed then that I was making one of those moral decisions that I had heard so much

FORGET FATHERS

The Anatomy Lesson by Philip Roth

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 291 pp., \$14.95)

In Philip Roth's early story "The Conversion of the Jews," a small boy, by threatening to throw himself from a high roof, gets his mother, his rabbi, the caretaker of his synagogue, and a crowd of waiting firemen and schoolmates all to kneel down and confess a belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary the mother of Jesus. It is an act of power and revenge and desecration on the boy's part, a wild mischief, but it is also a bid for freedom, and a secular sermon on the tiles. The boy has been hit by the rabbi and by his mother for asking intelligent but irreverent questions about religion, has fled in panic to the top of the building and discovered the magical properties of his possible leap; he says now "You shouldn't hit me about God, Mama. . . . Promise me, promise me you'll never hit anybody about God." The whole kneeling assembly solemnly promises, and the boy jumps down into the firemen's yellow net, which glows in the dusk "like an overgrown halo."

The perfect poise of this story depends on the innocence of the boy's curiosity—he only wants to know why the deity who created light can't cause a virgin to conceive if he wishes—and on a complicated cultural irony. History is full of people being hit about God, but the hitters have not usually been Jews. The boy leads his people out of their narrow, nervously defended cage into

the cage of an even more cruel and haughty keeper.

Other characters in Roth's fiction are not so innocent, but they keep stumbling into the same irony: you can't escape your past without getting entangled in someone else's present and past. The recurring comic form of this situation in Roth is marriage to a gentile. Nathan Zuckerman, in *My Life as a Man*, defends his sister's right to marry a man who is "worthless by most anyone's standards" and "repulsive" to the 15-year-old Zuckerman himself. His parents missed his point, he says, and he, with his "high-minded permissiveness," missed theirs; and his sister successively found two husbands "who confirmed, in nearly every detail, my family's prejudice against them."

Another form of the situation is Roth's fiction itself: a series of insults to the world of the fathers. At least, this is how his writer-heroes find their work is viewed, and they simultaneously court and are outraged by the charge. "Forget fathers," Zuckerman tells himself in *Zuckerman Unbound*. "Plural." In *The Anatomy Lesson*, which completes the trilogy begun with *The Ghost Writer*, Zuckerman is still tender on this score, furious at being thought anti-Semitic merely because he metaphorically converts the Jews, holds them up to the harsh stare of gentile eyes. I keep thinking of a scene in Woody Allen's *Annie*

about in college literature courses." Here is a television producer, in *Zuckerman Unbound*, explaining that quiz shows have to be fixed because contestants might not know the answers.

You would have just failure, and failure does not make entertainment. You have to have a plot, like in *Hamlet* or anything else first class. . . . Does Hamlet get up from the stage and say I don't want to die at the end of the play? No, his part is over and he lies there. That is the difference, in point of fact, between schlock and art. Schlock goes every which way . . . and art is controlled. . . .

This is marvelous, devastating nonsense, the liberated mind serving mischief, as so often in Roth, and it helps us to see what he is up to. Freedom for Roth, the flight from the constrictions of past affections and fidelities, is always an art of the scathing intelligence, thought mocking its old chains. But it is also—in travestied form for his heroes, in muted, almost shamefaced form for the sensibility that shapes the books—an act of betrayal. No freedom without treason, is the dark message beneath the whirling gags. Newark and Jewry stand for all countries and cultures, unbearable but cherished, left and not left by children on the move.

"I think of you," Zuckerman says to an older man in *The Ghost Writer*, "as the Jew who got away." Roth's Jews never get away. The fathers (plural) are never forgotten, only baited, if necessary in their graves. They are also retrospectively, and in the tone of the writing rather than in anything the writing says, cautiously loved. "Can you honestly say," a Jewish judge writes to the young Zuckerman, "that there is anything in your short story that would not warm the heart of a Julius Streicher or a Joseph Goebbels?" This is a broad swipe, and can't hurt much—Zuckerman has merely used the undignified antics of his family in his fiction—but it follows, indeed it covers and compensates for, an extraordinary scene between Zuckerman and his father, who also felt that his son's story placed the Jews in a disadvantageous light, portrayed them as just the Jews that anti-Semites love to hate. The scene ends with Zuckerman taking the bus back from Newark to New York, and with the rubbery sound of the bus's pneumatic door swinging shut:

an overly appropriate thump, a symbol of the kind you leave out of fiction. . . . What I heard was the heartrending thud

that follows the roundhouse knockout punch, the sound of the stupefied heavy-weight hitting the canvas floor. And what I saw, when I looked out to wave good-bye for the winter, was my smallish, smartly dressed father—turned out for my visit in a new "fingertip" car coat that matched the coffee-toned slacks and the checkered peaked cap, and wearing, of course, the same silver-rimmed spectacles, the same trim little mustache that I had grabbed at from the crib; what I saw was my bewildered father, alone on the darkening street-corner by the park that used to be our paradise, thinking himself and all of Jewry gratuitously disgraced and jeopardized by my inexplicable betrayal.

ALL Zuckerman's protests and all Roth's jokes can't make this vision go away: the father denied and excluded by the son. It doesn't actually matter that the son is right, that his story is no doubt innocuous. When Zuckerman fantasizes a marriage with a miraculously preserved Anne Frank he is trying to exorcise this figure, to trump the hand of the Newark Jews with an unbeatable European card: who can call him a traitor now? But he is also missing the point, dodging the issue by hamming it up. And Roth, too, I'm afraid, misses his own delicately made point, cheapens the scruple and concern of his novel into grimace and gesturing. It is not that the girl is *not* Anne Frank, that Zuckerman is only dreaming; it is the coarse quality of the dream that is disappointing. Zuckerman briefly sees that his playing with Jewish martyrology is "a desecration even more vile" than his modest story, but the thrust of the book suggests that the poor boy has been driven to this unfortunate extreme by his own edgy character and an uncomprehending world, rather as the boy in "The Conversion of the Jews" was driven to the roof. But no one is hitting Zuckerman; or Roth. *The Ghost Writer* is his best work since *Good-bye, Columbus*, and one of the subtlest, most commanding pieces of fiction written by anyone in recent years. But it has this soft, self-guarding streak, the place where the abandoned father is not looked at but buried in burlesque.

Zuckerman Unbound and *The Anatomy Lesson* maintain the broader comedy and so run fewer risks. Both are narrated in the third person, not in Zuckerman's unfiltered voice, although there are plenty of descents into Zuckerman's mind, and some splendid, word-

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spinning Zuckerman monologues. As we have known since *Portnoy*, Roth is the textual equal of the best fast-talking comedians, and his verve is unfailing. In *Zuckerman Unbound* our hero tries to live with his fame as the author of the lurid and best-selling *Carnovsky*, and with the death and dying curse of his father, and with the strangled resentment of his brother. He is hounded by a disgraced quiz contestant from the 1950s—a man who really knew the answers and didn't want to be fed them—by threatening phone calls and by his own wobbling conscience. Did his betrayals really bring his father to the grave? The comedy modulates not into an answer to Zuckerman's questions but into an evocation of his bereavement. He winds up in his lost Newark, doubly depopulated by the removal of his parents and the enormous changes in the place. He is a ghost himself now. "Who you supposed to be?" a black man asks, eyeing Zuckerman in his vast, rented limousine complete with bodyguard. "No one," Zuckerman

says, and thinks, "and that was the end of that."

But Zuckerman is not no one, and in *The Anatomy Lesson* he is alive and distinctly unwell. He has four mistresses in place of one dead mother, a compensation beyond Proust's wildest dreams, but he is smitten by a mysterious, unremitting pain for which all his friends and doctors have different, plausible diagnoses. It is a symptom of guilt over his great success, a manifestation of his fear of everything, an expression of his deeply buried anger. Zuckerman, sensibly, is having none of this: the pain is just stupid, meaningless pain. He sees orthopedists, neurologists, a physiotherapist, a rheumatologist, a radiologist, an osteopath, a vitamin doctor, an acupuncturist, and an analyst, and despairs not only of finding a cure but of finding "an honest disease." He is "bewildered by defeat on a front where he hadn't even known himself to be at war."

He begins to lose his hair (along with "his confidence, his sanity, and his self-respect"), and quarrels with a distinguished Jewish critic who has berated him for pandering to gentiles and self-hating Jews and now wants him to write something uplifting about Israel. The time is 1973: the world of the fathers strikes again. Zuckerman decides to escape what Henry James (endorsed in *The Ghost Writer* by the young Zuckerman) called the madness of art, the business of "complicating life for himself on paper," and to go to medical school in Chicago. On the flight out to look into the possibilities, popping pills against the pain, he becomes more than faintly manic, and goes into a vivid impersonation of a porno king which lasts for days. All Roth's escalating wit is on display here, and he hits some good targets too: the comforts of seriousness in art and criticism ("as though seriousness can't be as stupid as anything else"), the hypocrisies of many emancipated attitudes toward sex

("People used to say to me when I first went into sleaze, How long are they going to let you do this? That's crazy. What are they letting me do? . . . They think I give freedom a bad name. Freedom's supposed to have a bad name. . . .").

But among the fireworks lurks Zuckerman's pain. Roth speaks of the "selfness of pain": "Had he kept a pain diary, the only entry would have been one word: myself." The pain confirms his old self-absorption and imprisons him in it. And this, it seems, is Roth's worry and the underlying subject of his book. He wrote recently, in *The New York Times Book Review*, about the "consequences of writing fiction in Czechoslovakia," compared with the cozy consequences, the tiny penalties, and the big perks, of successful writing in America. Zuckerman has a Polish mistress, whose story, he thinks, may lead him away from self, from what he calls his "dwarf drama":

You don't want to represent her Warsaw—it's what her Warsaw represents that you want: suffering that isn't semi-comical, the world of massive historical pain instead of this pain in the neck.

Zuckerman's pain, it seems, is the self, that subject which regularly threatens American writers like a descending glass jar. His interest in medical school is an attempt to reach out to others. ("Other people," he muses, "somebody should have told me about them a long time ago." But would he have listened?) At the end of the book he achieves a modest immersion in the life of a Chicago hospital, not as a doctor, but as a walking patient, recovering from a fractured jaw (he fell on a Jewish tombstone while high on vodka and Percodan, trying to strangle an old man he took for yet another representative of the unappeasable fathers).

But does the problem lie in the self or in history? Are our writers trivial because they are not jailed or muzzled as in the Eastern bloc, or because they can't see beyond their private pain? Are they trivial at all, or is the triviality Roth's? His answer, as I read it from his novels, is a telling and complicated one. We can't hanker for oppression in order to make ourselves feel significant. That would be absurd, and an insult to those who are oppressed—the political equivalent of dreaming up a marriage to Anne Frank. But the self does need enemies: fathers, critics, communities,

THE HIGH DIVING HORSE

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a mile out over the sea, a horse
lopes two stories into the sky
up a wooden gangplank, helmeted
bathing beauty on his back.

He gains the upper deck, looks
down, studies the fine line
between hooves and air,
the people snorting below.
He lays out his brown throat,

nods his nose to his knees.
Two forelegs drop
over the edge. The horse
lets himself go, falling
wingless into sea. The great

flapping; waters split apart,
a tumult of foam rising
silver and uncontained; the horse
gone down like a stone.

Unperturbed, he surfaces, the girl
swimming beside him. Loudspeakers
coax the necessary march and
we retreat, not fearful,
not satisfied.

BARBARA HELFGOTT HYETT

wives, fans, spongers, or even commissars—all manifestations of the reality principle, "life itself," "the real raw thing," the heavy stuff that holds the fantascator down. Only enemies tug us toward others. If freedom means betrayal in Roth's early work, betrayal means reality in the later novels, since it proves there is something there to be betrayed.

This makes sense, although the self still has a noisy role, and there are other ways of dealing with the world. The self, in this view, only wants the world as confirmation of its existence. Accomplished and enjoyable as the work is, the snag with *The Anatomy Lesson* is that Roth invites us to see the delusion in Zuckerman's altruism but then still gives him full marks for being decent enough to entertain it. Zuckerman wants to go to medical school in the way he wanted to marry Anne Frank: as an answer to the critics in his head.

But this pathetic maneuver is so transparent that it won't carry the weight Roth placed on it.

Zuckerman himself should have seen, as he sees so many other things, that his doctor dream was not sturdy enough even for fantasy. "Oh, ironic paranoia is the worst," he thinks on the subject of his anger. You "see your roaring, righteous hatred as a supremely comical act," but you go on roaring. Ironic narcissism is not much better: you see the grinning ego in all your attempts to escape from self, but you still applaud the attempts, as if they really took you away from the mirror.

MICHAEL WOOD

Michael Wood, professor of English at the University of Exeter, is the author of *Stendhal* (Cornell University Press) and *America at the Movies* (Dell).

ney, bearing only a suitcase full of her clothes and a packet containing her ashes.

On the road he is accosted by vagrants, robbed by soldiers, and picked up by the authorities who, finding he has no papers, set him to work as part of a labor gang on the railroad. "Why have I got to work here?" K plaintively asks. One of his companions impatiently replies, "There's nothing special about you. There's nothing special about any of us." His gesture embraced them all: prisoners, guards, foremen." Michael K's life and times are made up of a series of encounters with people who are confounded by his quiet acts of defiance, and who do their best to educate him in the ways of the world.

They don't succeed. K, it seems, has a rudimentary comprehension of the meaning of freedom that has been lost to most people. For a time he lives out his idyll at the abandoned farm in Prince Albert which he believes to be his mother's birthplace. As he scatters her ashes, he begins "his life as a cultivator." He plants pumpkin seeds, living "by the rising and setting of the sun, in a pocket outside time." When a young deserter from the army comes back to reclaim the farm, and attempts to transform K into his servant, K slips into the mountains where he lives in a cave and keeps himself alive by nibbling at roots and grubs and flowers. Finally creeping back into town in search of food, he is mistaken for a drunk and taken to a work camp, where his fellow inmates try to explain that he should be grateful to the state for providing him with food and shelter and an occupation. But at his first opportunity K climbs the fence and vanishes once more, having learned only that "a man must live so that he leaves no trace of his living." He returns to his family of pumpkins and melons at the farm, building himself an unobtrusive shelter, hiding by day and emerging at dusk to tend his garden—"a wild man all skin and bones and rags rising up out of the earth at the hour of bat-flight." The next time he is discovered, he is suspected of sheltering guerrillas and taken to a rehabilitation camp. Again he escapes.

Coetzee's prose is purposefully simple, and the stories he writes are both lyrical and brutally pointed. He is not primarily concerned with plot and character development and the particularities of a politics rooted in time

SOUTH AFRICAN SPECTER

Life and Times of Michael K by J. M. Coetzee

(Viking, 184 pp., \$13.95)

In J.M. Coetzee's last novel, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the narrator was plagued by the question of what it means to comply, however reluctantly, with a social system that breaks people's wills and cramps their souls. In *Life and Times of Michael K*, Coetzee's central character, "the obscurest of the obscure, so obscure as to be a prodigy," is a black man who tries to live outside that system. Autonomy proves as difficult for Michael K as a free conscience was for the troubled magistrate. The nameless, faceless rulers of Coetzee's South Africa do not look kindly upon critics and deviants. Nor does Coetzee himself offer his protagonists—or his readers—much solace. This distinguished Afrikaner novelist, who recently received England's Booker Prize for *Life and Times of Michael K*, writes mesmerizing allegories about survival in a barbarous civilization. Here, as Michael K discovers in the course of his travels, self-sufficiency is tantamount to an act of treason.

Michael K is an unlikely hero: he's not quite a simpleton, but he's not quite whole either. He has inherited some of the features of his literary forebears, the shadowy, disoriented protagonists of Kafka's fiction. Born with a harelip, K grows up a physical and spiritual oddity, making no demands of others, and vaguely believing that none will be made of him. His trade is gardening, and his only desire is to be left alone to nurture his crops. "He thought of himself not as something heavy that left tracks behind it, but if anything as a speck upon the surface of an earth too deeply asleep to notice the scratch of ant-feet, the rasp of butterfly teeth, the tumbling of dust." However, he finds it difficult to float through life unnoticed and untouched. He agrees to his mother's dying wish to be taken back to her birthplace, a small farm deep in the Karoo, even though the country is in the throes of civil war and he lacks the required permits. When she dies en route, he stolidly continues on his jour-



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and place. His subjects are the perversities of human nature and the rudiments of political culture: freedom and tyranny, crime and punishment. When he strikes a balance between his tangled themes and his terse style, as he did in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, his work has a depth and a seriousness of purpose that are rare in contemporary fiction. Through the magistrate, Coetzee showed how a society ruled by fear ultimately degenerates into a state of anarchy, where law and lawlessness are indistinguishable, and even gestures of goodwill are corrupt. The magistrate took up with a barbarian girl in a clumsy attempt to understand himself through her suffering, only to discover that his tenderness would no more win her trust than the savagery of her torturers would compel her obedience. "How natural a mistake," he drily reflected, "to believe that you can burn or tear or hack your way into the secret body of the other!"

What, then, is one to make of the protagonist of *Life and Times of Michael K*, who like the barbarian girl is ultimately inaccessible? Coetzee has made no attempt in this novel to create a credible human being; K is a cipher. Too simpleminded to know the meaning of compromise, he is able to live the life of moral purity that eludes the magistrate. He knows he is a misfit, but there his powers of analysis cease.

Always, when he tried to explain himself to himself there remained a gap, a hole, a darkness before which his understanding balked, into which it was useless to pour words. The words were eaten up, the gap remained. His was always a story with a hole in it: a wrong story, always wrong.

The hole, of course, is the essence of K's story, and this fey, insubstantial "creature of twilight" makes for an oddly moving allegorical figure. The novel falters when Coetzee attempts to fill in the gap.

The last fifty pages of *Life and Times of Michael K* are devoted to overwrought explication. Presumably Coetzee felt that K's story alone was too elliptical, and that the novel needed a structural and theoretical framework. In part two the narration shifts from K's cryptic point of view to the ponderous thoughts of the medical officer at the rehabilitation camp, who takes it upon himself to save—and decipher—K's life; in part three it shifts back to K, who reveals, in an uncharacteristic political

rumination about the state as a vast network of camps for the dispossessed, that he has found his niche at last. The doctor keeps a careful journal of K's progress, in which he jots down earnest banalities about his patient: his is "a soul blessedly untouched by doctrine," "a body that was going to die rather than change its nature." Pleading with his superior to release K and fudge the reports, he tells him, "people like Michaels are in touch with things you and I don't understand. They hear the call of the great good master and they obey. . . . Michaels means something. . . ."

Coetzee gently mocks the medical officer's need to impose meanings on K that apply more to his own life than to his patient's (he doesn't even have K's name right). And in doing so, he is implicitly mocking his own quest for meanings, which is, after all, not so different from the gropings of the magistrate and the doctor. But this irony at his own expense isn't enough to rescue the novel. *Life and Times of Michael K*, which starts out as an eloquent incantation about an outcast with a peculiar kind of hubris, ends as a self-conscious sermon about a society of dead souls.

DOROTHY WICKENDEN

BRIEF REVIEWS

A Vanished World by Roman Vishniac

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux,
192 pp., \$49.95)

For orthodox Jews the Torah's prohibition against graven images applies to photography; Roman Vishniac confesses, therefore, to having used a hidden camera, but he also protests that "photography had not been invented when the Torah was written!" Despite the ancient prohibition and, more frightening, the danger of imprisonment by the Nazis ("A man with a camera was always suspected of being a spy."), Vishniac persisted, and took over sixteen thousand photographs in his effort to save the memory of his people.

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November

1

1963—Diem coup successful. (see June 30)

1972—The *Washington Post* reports on White House study requiring "manufacture and installation of special FM receivers in every home radio and television set, boat and automobile, which could be automatically turned on by the government to contact every citizen, whether awake or asleep," and called for "full coverage, 100 percent of the population."

1982—*Detroit Free Press* reports a Santa Clara, Ca., chief parole officer proposes attaching computers to parolees to monitor their whereabouts and also the use of electronic implants to control violent criminals.

or to those in *A Vanished World*, which contains 181 black-and-white photographs of Jewish life in the villages, cities, and countryside of Eastern Europe. Rabbis and students, shopkeepers, shoemakers, porters, street vendors, and many children—nearly everyone who appears in the book was eventually murdered by the Nazis.

Again and again the photographs have the force of manifestations, rather than images, especially insofar as they suggest, by the very fact of their limitedness, the immensity of what has been lost. Though plainly excellent photographs, they should not inspire sophisticated critical discussion of techniques and values. Still, it may occur to you that, since the 1930s when Vishniac carried his camera through Eastern Europe, there have been technological advances but very few of those mysterious photographers of whom it is impossible to say whether they are geniuses or unbelievably lucky. This dilemma, I be-

lieve, haunts the practitioners of no other modern art.

Vishniac himself asks, "Why was I there?" He attributes neither genius nor luck to himself. If he supposes that his photographs reveal God's will, it might be the better part of wisdom not to argue with him. The evidence of a beauty and seriousness beyond art is tremendously impressive.

Here we see an old man with a flame-like, sinuous, El Greco face; and here a fool, stunted and broad-faced, with a beatific smile; and here strides a rabbi in his long winter coat, fur hat, big black clumsy shoes. We see other Jews, in every mood and weather, in the medieval streets of Kraków, or the small squalid apartments of Warsaw, or the farmland of Carpathian Ruthenia. I'm confident that you will recognize some of them—they could be an old friend in Chicago; a second cousin in Baltimore; the boy who wants to marry your daughter; your math teacher in high school. Perhaps, until this moment, remembering, you didn't really know how much you liked them. The faces are innocent, lovely, wretched, vacant, and always soon-to-be-murdered.

With a kind of bitter exhilaration, Elie Wiesel says in the foreword to the book, these victims "still live." He goes on to say, praising Vishniac's miraculous achievement, that they are "more alive than we who 'read' without understanding them." To anyone not cynical or blind, it may seem Wiesel is correct. Looking at these photographs, we don't understand the victims; we feel too much the terrible distinction between them and us. Is it the reader or is it the little girl photographed in Lodz, in 1937, who is truly a ghost? Her face has a most penetrating, exquisite, adorable vitality; perhaps everything we can mean by the word "life." At least everything good. She seems overburdened by intelligence and sentience, being, as she is, little. So precise, so receptive is her look, one suffers in returning it. One forgets she is a photograph. In this way—beyond words or actions—the victims appear in *A Vanished World* more alive than we. Perhaps, by comparison, we merely remain. To look. These photographs of Roman Vishniac constitute a literally monumental work.

LEONARD MICHAELS

Leonard Michaels is the author of *The Men's Club* (Avon).

Mr. Bedford and the Muses by Gail Godwin

(Viking, 229 pp., \$14.95)

It would be a shame to reveal who (or actually what) Mr. Bedford is, but his curious identity is, in a way, the essence as well as the mascot of this book. Let's just say that he is a muse of an unusual sort, embodying sureness rather than quickness of insight, and presiding over a collection concerned as much with the process of fiction as its contents. Most of these stories (the book is composed of a novella—"Mr. Bedford"—and five short stories) are about writers. Several of them are young women, hungry for experiences and unceasingly observant, ambitiously eager to turn life into art.

But experiencing always seems to get in the way of their writing, or else writing in the way of truly experiencing. For all the furious journal-keeping and extravagant letter-writing these young women do, their stories aren't told from their wide-eyed and eager point of view. This is where Mr. Bedford comes in. Requested at the book's beginning to "lead me now, in your diligent, slow-footed way, through the precarious realm of fiction-in-progress," he becomes the narrator's silent partner—an inspiration and a guide, as Godwin reveals in her "Author's Note," to the way his story should be told.

Carrie, the narrator of "Mr. Bedford," prefaces her story with the statement that it is the outcome of a "retrospective read" of her old journals, and Godwin says that the story is in fact based on notebooks she kept in London in the early 1960s. But even while she is re-creating her past, Godwin is enjoyably aware of her ability to blur the distinction between the real and the fictional. As Carrie reaches the end of her tale she says,

In here, in the confines of my fiction, we are all still alive. Some of us are still young, plotting our favorite versions of the love, accomplishment, beauty, elegance, and wealth we hope to win for ourselves. And even for those whose main chances are now a thing of the past, nobody is friendless or destitute or *too* old or in great physical pain; nobody is even in the hospital.

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—Father Carney E.S. Gavin, Curator, Harvard Semitic Museum

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The benefit of distance and age, from a writer's point of view, is the ability to detach oneself from the raw materials of immediate experience, even while recognizing (perhaps with tongue in cheek) the power of fiction to preserve those experiences forever. Guided by her diligent muse, Godwin is skillful in her alternation between involvement in her characters' lives and witty detachment from them. She ends "A Father's Pleasures," a wrenching story of a dotting father who loses his sweet second wife to the arms of his son, with the seemingly bland comment, "Paul and Liane remained married and lived healthy, ordinary lives. They had no children."

HER LONG vision allows Godwin to play wryly with the fates of her characters: "Jean-Louis would marry her, but Alexander, who brooded slyly upon her ripeness as he sucked deeply on his cigarette, would have her first.)" She clearly enjoys her powerful role as author; in fiction, she says, "you can keep people alive for as long as you like." But that authorial influence, while occasionally amusing, never becomes intrusive; Godwin seems to share the intermittent desire of Constance in "Amanuensis" to "see what was happening when she didn't interfere." With exquisite control, Godwin the writer restrains Godwin the inventor and memorializer. After the dramatic culmination of "A Father's Pleasures" (" 'This will kill him,' moaned Paul, covering the trembling Liane with his body under the canopy of stars."), Godwin seems to pause and consider before going on:

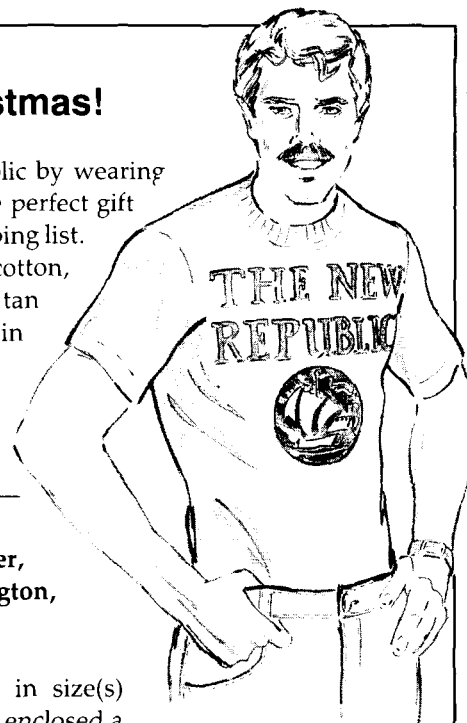
But of course it did not. Rudolf was one of those people born to survive, even cheerfully, their own worst sorrows and to build new lives upon the ruins of their old ones. It took him time to get over it, but get over it he did. When enough time had passed for him to think of it philosophically, he even decided the whole thing had been orchestrated by him, in some subterranean depth of his psyche, so that he might, after all, attain perfect fatherhood.

If Godwin sometimes delights in directing and revising events, she also seems to grant the ability of her characters to muddle through by themselves, even to comprehend and control their own lives.

KATHLEEN KEARNS

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better than being a "Contributor" (\$125), when the only material difference is a "post-performance supper-dance on the Promenade" rather than a "pre-performance cocktail party with hors d'oeuvres." Almost all the gala tickets were purchased by corporations, which means that the government was out about \$460,000 in tax deductions for the evening. So this million-dollar charity gala netted the public weal, after expenses, about \$200,000.

It is only reasonable that people should get an hors d'oeuvre or two for their generosity. The experts have this down to a science. The "benefit package" (another term of art) being worked out for large contributors to the Statue of Liberty will include special V.I.P. seating for the centennial celebration, or possibly a special V.I.P. barge in a roped-off part of the adjacent waters. "It's a pretty small island, you know," one harried expert pointed out. Huddled masses will not be the order of the day.

Trouble is, the corporate executives who enjoy the material and spiritual rewards of "private" generosity are playing Medici with other people's money. Their generosity costs them nothing. The stockholders of American Express are not invited to these celebrations, and the idea that there's anything "voluntary" about their contribution is a fantasy.

The silliness and waste of campaigns like this one are the price we pay for the Reaganite conceit that it is innately bad for society to spend its resources through the government. How best to balance costly social goals with people's right to enjoy the fruits of their own labor, and with the needs of the private economy, is one of the great political questions. This notion of replacing government with private charity simply trivializes it. That's why, to take a more serious example, it's depressing rather than inspiring to read all the current hype about corporations "adopting" tax-starved public schools. What's the point? If a shared national goal is worth the money—and I'd like to hear President Reagan say that repairing the Statue of Liberty is not—there's no reason why a democratically elected government shouldn't tax us to finance it. Who wouldn't pay a dollar a person to keep Miss Liberty from becoming a high-priced corporate tart?

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Dwight D. Eisenhower



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WESTPORT DIARIST

Confessions of a Faux Gourmet

AM I ALL ALONE out here? Is there no one else at home like me who yearns to make *pâté de foie gras* or, at the very least, mincemeat, out of writers of gourmet cookbooks? To julienne Julia, to de-beard James, to simmer Alice Waters? To bombe the whole lot of them back to the Fanny Farmer stone age, before a carrot stick had evolved into a *crudité*? They have made a lot of trouble for us. We had it easier as neolithic hunters and gatherers, digging for roots and tubers all day; now we root for truffles and tree ears at Dean and Deluca's during our lunch hour. And they've cost us plenty, too, just in pots and pans, never mind small appliances, butcher block, marble, and saffron. Never have so few undone so many.

I'M NOT SURE who started this obsessive escalation ever *haute-ward*, or exactly when it happened. It may have begun in the 1940s. Was my mother responding to the earliest of gourmet urges when she upped the ante on tomato juice by adding to it a dash of Worcestershire and a lemon wedge? Was her deviled egg the missing link between hard-boiled and Eggs à la Russe? Or perhaps it started with aspic. Her first experimental efforts with the magic of gelatin were modest enough—bits of grated carrot, or tiny chunks of diced fruit. Later, though, as her skill and ambition to impress her dinner guests increased, so the objects she trapped and hung en gelée grew in size and weight—walnuts, new potatoes, a loaf of bread, a side of beef. She once threatened to suspend an anvil in aspic.

ALTHOUGH I HAVE none of Mother's gastronomic derring-do, I have, unfortunately, inherited her need to be out there on the culinary cutting edge. Much as I would love to get away with serving my guests a brisket sprinkled with a packet of California Onion Dip and wrapped in a shroud of aluminum foil, I don't dare. How can I, when to the right and left of me my friends are laboring over a Navarin Printanière or a Lamb Shank Daube? All the signs indicate that theirs is a genuine obsession with haute cuisine. Their extra virgin olive oil is redundantly chaste. Dill grows on their window sills. Violets candy overnight in cool places. Somewhere a wine is breathing. Some of them tell me

they read gourmet cookbooks—for fun. I read them, too, but not for fun. I read them with the cold, pragmatic eye of a faux gourmet. I have bried, quiched, and moussed with the best of them, and so far they haven't found me out.

HOW DO I DO IT? Those people who like to stand for hours (on top of a brick, no less) firming up a pistachio and duck liver *pâté*, will probably not be interested in knowing how I manage to enjoy a reputation for being a real gourmet cook when the words "Court Bouillon" still make me think of Louis XIV. Others, I dare to hope, will read on. The secret of my success lies not in the cooking, but in the reading. The point is to find a recipe that is at once simple and pretentious, without resorting to sleazy arriviste cookbooks with titles like *The Reluctant Gourmet*, *The Soft Palate Cookbook*, or *Chez Short Cut*. Basically, it's a research job, and a demanding one, since legitimate gourmet cookbooks rarely contain more than one or two suitably easy recipes among hundreds, which is why, for starters, you will have to acquire a large number of cookbooks. Next, open one of them and browse through the table of contents. Names can be deceiving, but it is possible to begin, albeit haphazardly, to winnow out the hopelessly demanding recipes by this technique. "Fresh Pineapple Sherbet with Champagne Sabayon and Candied Rose Petals Escoffier," for instance, would not be a good choice. On the other hand, do not necessarily be put off by long names. "Rack of Lamb Roasted with Herbs and Served with White Purée," when you break it down into its component parts and analyze it, may not be such a big deal, assuming, of course, that the mysterious component, the "white purée," doesn't turn out to be a three-page epic.

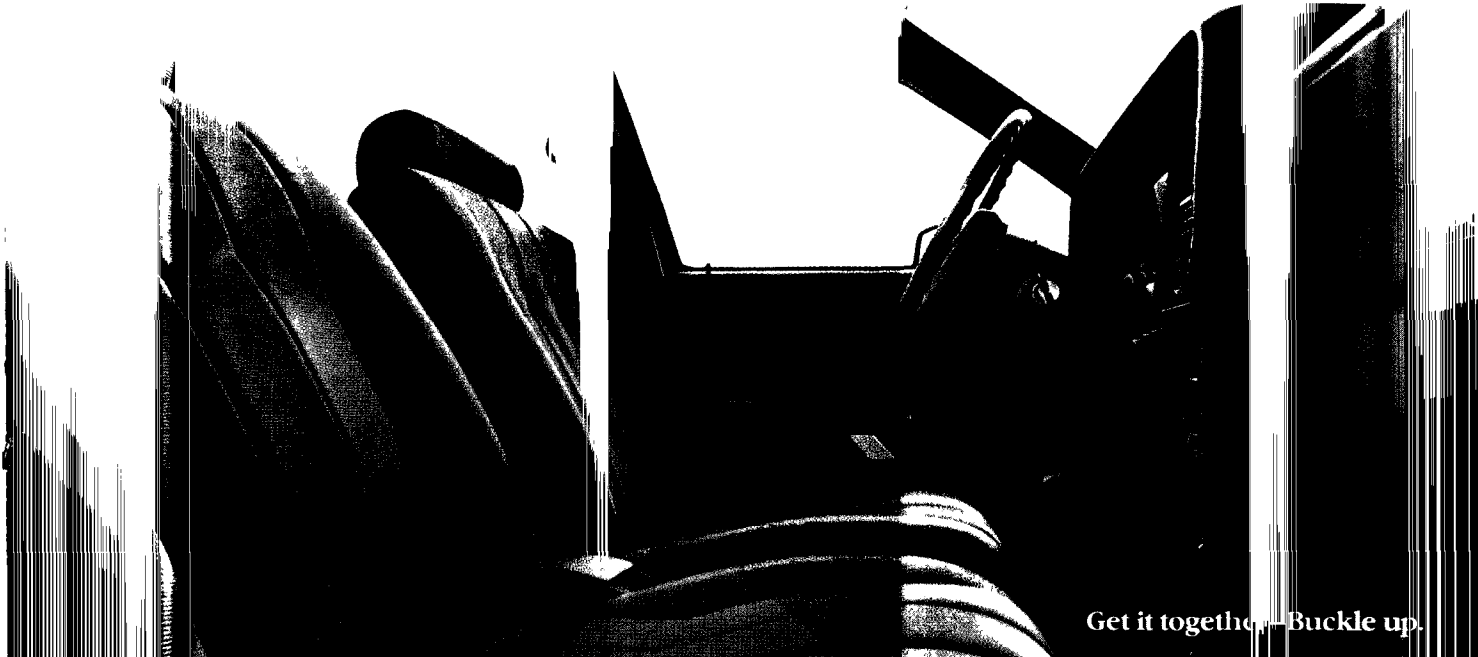
WHEN YOU THINK you've got a live one, turn to the page indicated and start reading the ingredients. Again, do not be discouraged by length. Remember that ordinary items like salt, pepper, oregano, and a stick of unsalted butter take up just as much typographical space as a handful of nasturtium petals or one-half pig's foot which, as a matter of fact, is an ingredient in the above-mentioned neighbor's Lamb Shank Daube, and is one of many reasons why

I have never attempted it. Let her daube away, hacking at cloven hooves. You keep moving and don't look back. (Remember what happened to Lot's wife on the way out of Gomorrah; she turned into a pillar of kosher salt.) When you have found an acceptably pretentious name and a manageable list of ingredients, begin to read the directions. Beware of any recipes that begin with the words, "Wash and dry 10 heads of tiny escarole"; "Peel and core 5 to 6 pounds Comise or Bosc pears and cut each pear into twelfths"; or "Early on the serving day. . . ." In fact, be suspicious of any instructions that do not begin with the reassuring words, "Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees." If the preamble doesn't discourage you, keep reading. Watch out for perilous nouns and verbs that could open up a Pandora's box of culinary mayhem, words like cheese cloth, parchment, membrane, stock, zest, fold, whisk, transfer, skim, knead, sift, braise, reduce, and blanch. Be on your guard. The need for *cookus interruptus* may occur at any moment. Should you come across one or more of these words, abandon the recipe and search for another. Remember also that a good faux gourmet does not sort through or soak lentils overnight, remove seeds from a tomato, or push anything through a sieve. Do not despair. Persist in your research efforts until you find the nice words. They are stir, pour, roast, sauté, and combine in blender.

A WORD ABOUT substitutions. Don't. "When you are faced with the absence of a certain ingredient," says one gourmet cookbook I snapped shut, "don't panic; formulate your own acceptable or inspired replacement, always having the anticipated harmony and balance of the dish uppermost in your mind." Do not permit yourself to be seduced by pretty prose or a flattering invitation to "improvise." Remember who you are. Fake gourmets don't improvise; they follow directions like fascists.

MARY-LOU WEISMAN

Mary-Lou Weisman, a freelance writer and the author of *Intensive Care: A Family Love Story* (Random House), suffers from occasional bouts with butcher's block.



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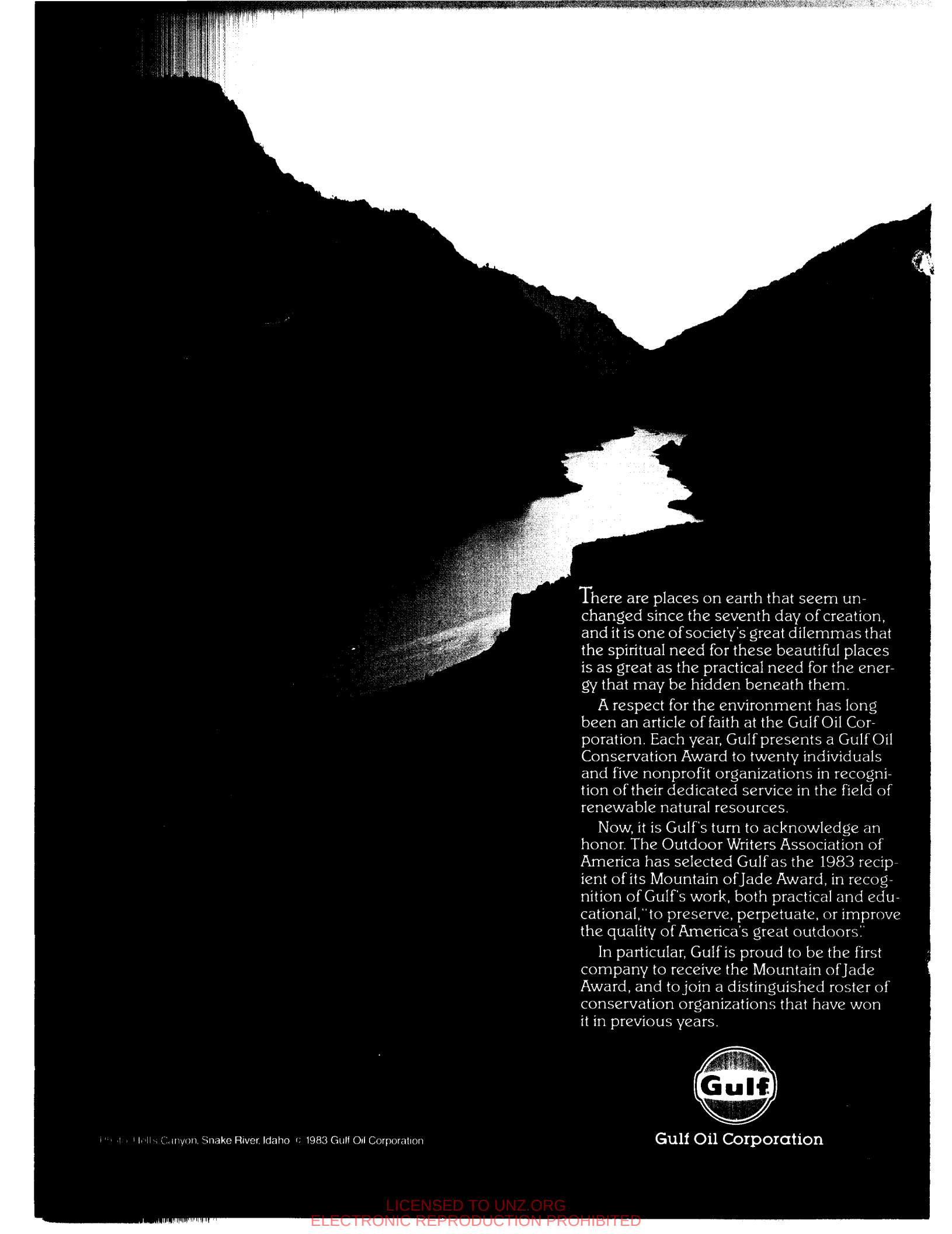
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